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THE ADVENTURES  
OF  
GERARD, THE LION KILLER,

COMPRISING

A HISTORY OF HIS TEN YEARS' CAMPAIGN AMONG THE  
WILD ANIMALS OF NORTHERN AFRICA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY CHARLES E. WHITEHEAD.

"At night he heard the lion roar,  
And the hyena scream,  
And the river horse, as he crushed the reeds  
Beside some hidden stream;  
And it passed like a glorious roll of drums  
Through the triumph of his dream."

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TO  
CAPTAIN JAMES Mc MINTOSH,  
UNITED STATES NAVY,  
A TRUE HUNTER, AND A TRUER FRIEND,

*This Volume*

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THE TRANSLATOR.



## INTRODUCTION.

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ONE summer day while loitering under the trees by the river Seine, where it flows through the Champs Elysées in Paris, watching the idle crowd, and speculating on its manners and meanings, some fancy led me to the shooting gallery of Monsieur Devisme.

The usual number of habitués and loungers were sitting within, talking and laughing together, and a man was standing opposite the target, with rifle in hand ready to take his shot. As I joined the group standing near him, he brought his rifle to his shoulder, and hardly had the barrel attained its level, before the piece was discharged, and the marker down at the other end of the gallery, called out "mouche" (the centre), at the same time marking the bullet hole with a white wand.

There was something so quick and decided in the motions of the man, and as I fancied something of the air of the Mississippi scout in his posture, that I crossed over to the other side of the gallery to see his countenance. A heavy black beard and moustache trimmed to a point, concealed the lower part of a bronzed visage. The turban of the Spahi uniform shaded his forehead, his face was thin, and almost the only uncovered feature of his countenance by which the spectator might judge the character of the man was the eye. This was dark and remarkably piercing, seeming to concentrate heat and light like a lens, and yet was not quick withal, but on the contrary, calm and slow in its movements.

Before my observations were finished, the attendant handed to the marksman another rifle. Dropping his right foot a step behind, he raised the gun quickly as before, a scarcely discernible instant of pause, and the report rang on the ear, while from the other end of the gallery came back the marker's call "*marlée*." Another shot and another, and always the same result, until a dozen shots had been fired, and a dozen bullets had been married, or piled, as the more literal Saxon would render it, in the centre of the target. The marksman then bowed politely to the group of gentlemen standing by, and passed out of the gallery. The buzz of conversation that had been hushed, was renewed, and turning to one of the attendants, I asked,

"Who is the gentleman who was just shooting here?"

"You don't know him? That was Gerard the Lion-Killer."

For more than a month I had seen that name placarded on all the Cabinets de Lectures, and in the book-shops of Paris, and had never had the curiosity to look at the work with which it was connected; now, on the contrary, I felt constrained to purchase the volume, and seating myself on one of the benches beneath the embowering trees, with all the great city pulsating around me, was soon away to the cool hills of the Zerazer, or watching the spoor of the lions as they came down to drink in the Mahouna valley.

The book is written in simple words, telling of great successes, and hand to hand battles with the lion, and portraying a hunter's feelings, his anxieties, and pleasures, with literal fidelity. The writer is rarely diverted from his story. Once in a while, the sound of a bugle wakes his professional military ardor; occasionally an oriental legend heard under the Arab tent, comes to his memory, but the *feray* and tale are soon ended, and he returns to the chase with more zest than ever.

After a short sketch of the different kinds of wild game that roam the plains of Sahara; or prowl among the hills of Algeria, the writer turns to his own peculiar game—the fierce Sultan of Atlas, the

**African Lion.** Treating his subject in an earnest, simple manner, he shows his kindly heart even in the battle for life or death that he daily fights, and protecting his game with sweeping sarcasm from all poaching traps, pit-falls, and assassin's wiles, he wages none but an equal and loyal warfare. The writer not only describes the chase and death of his noble prey, but he in a manner writes his life. Commencing with the courtship of the royal couple, he describes all their murmuring words, their caresses and jealousies. He introduces to us the infant cub under his wild olive bower, even before his eyes have opened to the sunlight, and shows his appearance, his gradual growth, and education; the motherly tenderness that watches over him, and the dawning intelligence that he evinces. The hunter, as if to prove the truth of observation by actual fact, goes to the very den of the lion, and taking a cub from its cradle, wraps it in his burnous, carries it to Guelma, and makes it his bosom friend and comrade; and the coldest reader cannot peruse the last scenes of Hubert's life without looking away from the book, and drawing a long breath to repress the gathering tear.

Our author follows the young lion from his birthplace until he takes his seat on the throne of his ancestors, and rules with undisputed sway a territory of twenty square leagues.

It is no amateur's study that he gives the reader, but it is his daily experience of nearly ten years. The intimacy is continued during the sleeping as well as waking hours of the sylvan king, and at night as well as in the day. Indeed in regard to an animal essentially nocturnal in his habits, the former noon-day acquaintance of natural historians was anything but satisfactory; but Gerard stood sentinel on the mountain side from sunset till daylight, listening for the jackal's bark that heralded the coming of the master, or carefully following him by his tracks under the light of the full moon to the half finished banquet he had left on the previous night. Truly a royal game for the hunter to play, and a pleasant tale for the reader who loves the

chase as the noblest of all pastimes, and it is for such as they that I translate this volume.

Brave hearts and true hunters, ye who scorn a snare and a battery as you would scorn a dishonest act, ye who love the associations and simple communings of the hunter's life, ye with whom I have hunted in the wild rice swamps of the Great Lakes, or on the limitless prairies, by "the plashy brink of weedy lakes" of Florida, or through the hushed pine forests of the north; ye who have shared with me your bed and loaf, whether you were the owner of broad lands, or like Mohammed-ben-Oumbark of our story, the possessor of nothing but your gun and your hunting knife, in either case alike simple in heart, and true in purpose, it is for you that I have translated the work I read by the laughing Seine. A labor of love in remembrance of past pleasures and future hopes.

And if the stories it contains can fill with profit an idle hour, or win a kindlier regard for a noble sport, the translator's end is attained.

NEW YORK CITY, *May 15th*, 1856.

# CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The Lion—His Education, Temperament, and Habits . . . . .	18
II. The Arab fashion of Hunting the Lion . . . . .	30
III. The Chase of the Panther . . . . .	66
IV. The Hyena . . . . .	83
V. Hunting the Wild Boar . . . . .	93
VI. The Jackal . . . . .	104
VII. The Stag, Antelope, and Gazel . . . . .	109
VIII. The Porcupine and other small Game . . . . .	117
IX. Hawking in Algeria . . . . .	126
X. Advice to the Amateur Lion Hunter . . . . .	149
XI. My Vocation . . . . .	178
XII. A Sketch of African Warfare . . . . .	187
XIII. My First Experience in Lion Hunting . . . . .	198
XIV. An Excursion into the Mahouna Country, and my Second Lion . . . . .	270
XV. The Lion of Krou Néga . . . . .	282
XVI. The Lion a Mesmeriser . . . . .	289
XVII. An Account of two Lions that "would not down." . . . .	294
XVIII. A Lion Killed on his own Hearthstone . . . . .	300
XIX. My Friend Abdallah, the Minstrel . . . . .	307
XX. My Friend Mohammed-ben-Oumbark, the Marauder . . . . .	310
XXI. The History of a Foundling . . . . .	318
XXII. My Adopted Child leaves Guelma and Welcomes me at Paris . . . . .	328
XXIII. Showing the Skill of the Lion in the Commissary Department . . . . .	334
XXIV. A Digression for Variety's sake . . . . .	339



CHAPTER	PAGE
XXV. The Misfortunes of Lakdar. A Lion that Devoured, without Indigestion, the Faculty of a College . . . . .	343
XXVI. Showing how my Comrade, Rostain, Bearded the Lion of Mezez-Amar . . . . .	348
XXVII. The Duchess of Orleans, and my Lion-Hunting Brigade . . . . .	353
XXVIII. A Lion-Hunt among the Natives of Constantine . . . . .	362
XXIX. A Double Shot among the Lions of Feazar . . . . .	366
XXX. A new kind of Bait for Lions, very Attractive, but Difficult to Obtain . . . . .	374
XXXI. My Old Friend, the Lion of Krenchela . . . . .	379
XXXII. A Lion Hunt in the Valley of Oiten, and the Tragical end of Amar-ben-Sigha . . . . .	382
XXXIII. A Hunt with the Arab Ladies . . . . .	395
XXXIV. Another Push for a Lion-Hunting Brigade . . . . .	402
XXXV. When the Cat's away, the Mice will play . . . . .	403
XXXVI. A Night with the Arabs. With Several True and Instructive Legends Adapted for Flirting Girls and Presumptuous Boys . . . . .	408
XXXVII. The Death of a Lioness, Illustrating the Fable of the Fly on the Coach-Wheel . . . . .	423

# THE LION KILLER.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE LION—HIS EDUCATION, TEMPERAMENT AND HABITS.

IN the month of January, 1848, I met at Paris Adulphe Delegorgue, the hunter and naturalist, who had passed seven years of his life among the Caffres and Amazouliaus, of South Africa, living on steaks of hippopotamus and cotelettes of rhinoceros.

I cannot describe the pleasure of this encounter, and not content with having read the voyages of my brother hunter, I pressed him with a thousand questions about his hunting adventures, and above all, about the lion of the Cape of Good Hope. I was so much struck with the slight analogy that exists between this animal and that of Algiers, that I immediately resolved to publish what I had learned concerning the ways and habits of the latter during many years of frequent intercourse with him.

Every one knows that the lion belongs to the feline race of animals, and yet strange to say, the most eminent natural-

ists, who have written upon this animal, have treated him as if he lived in the day-time only, and none of them have raised the veil that covers his nocturnal habits.

This grievous and inexplicable omission I will endeavor to supply, by taking the lion at his birth, and following him, step by step, to the hour of his death ; too happy if the acquaintance with him which I have formed can dissipate the false ideas that I have heard a hundred times expressed in regard to him in France, and even in Algiers where the natives alone understand his character.

It is ordinarily at the end of January that the monarch of Africa seeks his royal consort.

As the males are, by one third, more numerous than the females, it is not an uncommon occurrence to find one of these dusky belles accompanied by two or three pretendants, who indulge in most desperate battles for her favor. She at last becoming ennuyéd to find that these gallants do not strangle each other to share her undivided love, leads them towards the haunt of some brave old lion, whose valor is known afar by the thunder of his voice. The disputing lovers arrive with their mistress in the presence of the new rival, and march bravely forward. The negotiations are not long, and the result of the encounter is always certain. Attacked by the three lovers at once the old lion receives them without moving from his place ; he strangles the first with a grasp of his jaws, the second is thrown aside with a broken leg, and the third feels himself very happy if he can get away from the battle with one eye, which he very hastily does, leaving the other in the claws of his master.

The place once clear, the noble victor shakes out his mane to the wind, with a long roar, and then comes and stretches himself at the feet of his love, who for the first mark of her favor, licks the wounds he has received on her account with a fawning grace that awakens the tenderest emotions in his susceptible heart.

When two old lions meet upon the same adventure the affair is not so gaily terminated. Mohammed, an Arab of the tribe of Kesenna, told me of a combat of this nature where he was a spectator, though much against his will. It was in the stags' rutting season, and Mohammed, a great hunter of every kind of wild animals, perched himself at sunset in the boughs of an oak tree, to watch for a doe that he had seen wandering in the vicinity, accompanied by several stags. The tree which he had climbed was situated in the middle of a large clearing, and near a path that led into the neighboring forest. Towards midnight he saw a lioness enter the clearing, followed by a red lion with a full-grown mane. The lioness strolled from the path, and came and laid herself down at the foot of the oak, while the lion remained in the path, and seemed to be listening to some noise as yet inaudible to the hunter.

Mohammed then heard a distant roaring in the forest, and immediately the lioness answered it. Then the lion commenced to roar with a voice so loud that the frightened hunter let fall his gun and held on to the branches with both hands, lest he might tumble from the tree.

As the voice of the animal that had been heard in the distance gradually approached, the lioness welcomed him with renewed roarings, and the lion restless went and came

from the path to the lioness, as though he wished her to keep silence, and from the lioness to the path, as though to say, "Let him come, the vagabond, he'll find his match."

In about an hour a large lion as black as a wild boar stepped out of the forest and stood in the full moonlight on the other side of the clearing. The lioness raised herself to go to him, but the lion divining her intent, rushed before her and marched right at his adversary. With measured step and slow they approached to within a dozen paces of each other. Their great heads high in air, their tails slowly sweeping down the grass that grew around them. They crouched to the earth—a moment's pause—and then they bounded with a roar high in air and rolled on the ground, locked in their last embrace.

The battle was long and fearful to the involuntary witness of this midnight duel. The bones of the two combatants cracked under their powerful jaws, their talons strewed the grass with entrails, and painted it red with blood, and their roarings, now guttural, now sharp and loud, told their rage and agony.

At the beginning of the contest, the lioness crouched herself on her belly, with her eyes fixed upon the gladiators, and all the while the battle raged, manifested by the slow cat-like motion of her tail, the pleasure she felt at the spectacle. When the scene closed, and all was quiet and silent in the moonlight glade, she cautiously approached the battle-ground, and snuffing the dead bodies of her two lovers, walked eisurely away, without deigning to answer the groans, but

appropriate epithet that Mohammed hurled at her as she went, instead of a bullet.

This example of the conjugal coquetry and fidelity of the lioness, is applicable to all her species. What she desires is a lover full grown and brave who will drive away the young lions, whose beardless chins and constant quarrels offend her delicacy and trouble her repose. Such a lover she is sure to find, although she may not keep him, for the moment that a braver lion appears she gives him always a ready welcome. From what I have seen of the lion, I am led to believe that he has a more faithful heart than his fickle spouse, and never, unless forced to do so, changes his mistress, but takes her for better or for worse, during the whole term of his matrimonial connection, and he shows for her an affection and care that is worthy of a better return.

When the royal couple leaves its lair, both in going and returning, the lioness always leads the way, and when she pauses in her walk, the lion stops till she is ready to go on. After arriving at the Arab encampment where their supper is to be procured, the lioness lies down at a short distance off, while the lion bounds bravely into the enclosure, and selects for her whatever is best to her taste, and lays it down at her feet. He watches her with great pleasure while she makes her repast, and never thinks of eating himself, until she is satisfied. In a word, there is no form of tenderness that he does not manifest for her, either during or after the honeymoon.

When the lioness becomes heavy with young, which occurs during the latter part of December or the first of January

she seeks a dense and impenetrable ravine, where she may deposit her offspring. The litter varies in number from one to three, depending upon the age and the vigor of the lioness but there are ordinarily two cubs, one male and one female.

During the first few days after becoming a mother, she never leaves her cubs, even for an instant, and the father provides for all their wants. It is only after they have reached the age of three months, and have finished teething that the mother goes out to get food for them, and then is absent only a few hours each day. On her return she brings them mutton or some other simple food, carefully skinned, and torn in small pieces. The crisis of teething is a very important era in the life of the lion cubs, and a large number die at that period.

The male lion, who is of a very grave, and reserved character when old, does not love to stay by his offspring, whose childish gambols offend his dignity, and in order to be more tranquil, he selects a sleeping apartment in the jungle near that of his wife, and where he may be called in case of need.

The Arabs, when they find out a litter of lion cubs, by first seeing the lioness heavy with young, and afterwards by finding that their stolen cattle all take the same road, sometimes take advantage of the moment when the lioness is abroad in search of food, to rob her of her family.

To accomplish this end, they post themselves on a high cliff, or a tree overlooking the lair, and when they see the lioness go down to the plain, being sure the lion is not near his whelps, they creep under the jungle to the lair, they envelop the young they find in the nest in the folds of their bournous

to smother their cries, and carry them to the edge of the woods, where men are awaiting them with horses, and then putting the cubs before them on the saddle, they fly like the wind towards the open country. This kind of poaching, as well may be imagined, is no very safe amusement. Among other examples I will cite the following :—

During the month of March, 1840, a lioness had deposited her little ones in a wood called *El Guéla*, near the mountain of *Mezioun*, in the country of *Zerdezahs*. The chief of the country, *Zeiden*, made an appeal for help to his neighbor, *Sedek-ben—Oumbark* sheik, of the tribe of *Beni Fourral*, and upon a given day, thirty men from each of the two tribes came together upon the peak of *Mezioun*, at the break of day. These sixty Arabs, after having surrounded the woods, and vainly attempted to rouse the lioness, by repeated hurrahs, penetrated the thicket where she had concealed her offspring and brought out two young whelps.

This wonderful success pleased the Arabs greatly, and they were retiring carelessly to their tents, carrying the cubs with them, and thinking that they had nothing more to fear, when the sheik *Sedek*, being a little behind the others, saw the lioness rushing out of the woods directly at him. He hastily called his nephew, *Mecaoud*, and his friend, *Ali-ben-Braham*, who ran to his assistance. The lioness, instead, of attacking the sheik, who was on horseback, bounded on the nephew, who was on foot. The young man bravely faced the coming foe with his gun to his shoulder, and did not press the trigger until the animal was at gun's length, but the cap exploded without firing the piece.

*Mecaoud* threw aside his useless weapon, and presented his left arm wrapped in his bournous. The lioness seized the arm, and the bones crashed in her powerful jaws; but *Mecaoud*, without retreating a step or making a single cry, drew his pistol that he carried under his bournous, and forced the lioness to leave her hold by driving two balls in her breast. She then bounded on *Ali-ben-Braham*, who fired a ball down her throat as she rushed to the charge. He was seized by the shoulder and thrown down, his right hand ground to pieces, and he was torn in many places, only owing his rescue to the death of the lioness, that expired on his body. *Ali-ben-Braham* lived, but was crippled by the encounter, and *Mecaoud* died twenty-four hours after.

At the age of from four to five months the lions' whelps follow their mother during the night to the edge of the woods, where they wait for the lion to bring them their dinner.

At the age of six months, and during a dark night, the whole family change their domicile; and from this moment up to the time they leave their parents, the young lions constantly follow the old ones in pursuit of prey. From eight months to one year old they commence to attack the flocks of sheep or goats, that may be found wandering in the vicinity of their retreat. Sometimes they try their hand at catching horned cattle, but they are yet so awkward that there are often ten wounded for one killed, and their father is obliged to come in and interfere, lest they go supperless to bed.

† is not until they are two years old that they know how

strangle a horse, an ox or camel, with one grasp of the tr. at the throat of the animal, and to leap the hedges seven feet high, that are reputed to protect the Arab douars.

This period, from the time of the birth of the cubs until they are two years old, is truly ruinous for the people of the country inhabited by one of these happy families. Indeed they not only kill to eat, but they kill to learn to kill. It is easy to understand what such an apprenticeship must cost to those who furnish the materials for the clumsy tyros.

But it might be said, why do the Arabs let themselves be eaten by lions, without hunting and killing them? To this I would answer, read the details of the following chapter, and then if you ever pasture cattle in Africa, you will herd them at night behind walls fifteen feet high, or you will do as the Arabs.

When the lion's whelps reach the age of three years they leave their parents in order to get married; and the old couple, unwilling to remain alone, replace them by a new family.

The lions are not full grown until their eighth year, and then they attain their full strength and size, and the male, a third larger than the female, grows his full mane. We should not judge the lion living in his wild state, by his degenerate brother confined in a menagerie. The latter has been taken from its mother before being weaned, and has been raised like a rabbit, deprived of the maternal milk, and debarr'd from the desert life of liberty, and the living food its bravery conquered. From his seclusion arises his meagre form, his unhappy look, his unhealthy shape, and his lack of

mane which gives him the appearance of a spaniel, and<sup>h</sup> makes him an alien to his forest brother.<sup>th</sup>

There are in Algiers three species of lions: the black lion,<sup>h</sup> the red or tawny lion, and the grey lion, and they are styled by the Arabs, *el adrea*, *el asfar*, and *el zarzouri*.

The black lion is a much rarer animal than the others, and as a more powerful head, neck, shoulders and legs. The lower part of his body is clad in a robe of the color of a dark bay horse, and the shoulders are covered by a long, heavy black mane, that falls down on either side almost to the ground, and gives to him an air not at all reassuring. The breadth of his forehead is eighteen inches, the length of his body, from the tip of his nose to the root of the tail, measures five cubits,\* or seven feet and a half, and his tail, three feet. The weight of his body varies between six hundred and six hundred and sixty pounds.

The Arabs are more afraid of this lion than the two others, and they have good reason to be.

Instead of migrating from place to place, the black lion takes up his residence in some favorite retreat, and remains there sometimes thirty years. He rarely descends into the plain to get his food in the Arab camps,<sup>h</sup> but in revenge for this forbearance, lies in wait for the herds as they descend the mountain, and kills four or five beasts, merely for the pleasure of drinking their blood. In the summer season, when the days are long, he goes out at the setting of the sun, and crouches by some frequented path, where "the tinkling

\* The Arabs call a cubit the distance from the elbow to the end of the open hand.

caravan descends the mountain road," or watches for a traveller with his horse, or some belated herdsman. I know an Arab, who once, while riding home, met with such a bandit crouching by the road-side. The man sprang to the ground, stripped the saddle and bridle from his horse, and ran away, leaving his poor beast as a hostage in the grasp of the enemy. But these adventures are rarely terminated so pleasantly, and seldom does a man, either on foot or on horseback, regain his tent, who has met in his wanderings face to face with the black lion.

The tawny lion and the grey lion do not differ from each other, except in the color of the mane, and are a little larger than the black lion, and not so short. With the exception of the differences we have just shown, all the three species have the same character and habits. The life of this animal may be divided into two distinct eras, in which he seems to be, after a manner, an entirely different being, which difference has given rise to a thousand errors respecting him; these two eras are the day and night.

In the day-time he is accustomed to retire into the depths of the woods, at a distance from all noise, to sleep and digest his meals at his leisure. In the night he roams abroad, the king of the universe. It has been said that the lion will not attack a man, because perchance a man has found himself face to face with one, that the flies or the sun has obliged to change his lair, or that he has come down to the water to drink, and yet escaped with impunity, without remembering that the drowsy epicure was half asleep, and sated with food. He does not kill for the pleasure of killing, but to satisfy his hunger, or

to defend himself when attacked. In a country like Algiers, literally covered with herds, he is never fasting, except during the day, while sleeping; and the natives, knowing this, take care to stay at home when he quits his lair, or, if they are obliged to travel at night, they never go on foot or alone.

As to myself, I will say that if I have noticed an indifferent expression on the countenance of several lions whom I have met abroad early in the evening, I never saw those that I met at night exhibit other than the most hostile disposition. I am so sure that a single man is inevitably lost if he meets with such an encounter, that when I am bivouacking in the mountain, I never leave my tent after sunset for an instant, except with my carbine in my hand.

A large number of recent examples of Arabs who have been devoured in this manner, have come under my observation, but I will mention only the following, because it is known to all the natives of Constantine, and because the circumstances attending it were fearfully curious.

It occurred a few years previous to the occupation of this city by the French troops, that two brothers condemned to death, were confined in the city prison, awaiting their execution on the morrow. They were bandits of great renown for strength and courage; the Bey, fearing they might escape by their address and hardihood, gave orders that they should be ironed with *entraves*, that is, an iron ring which is bound around the right leg of one prisoner, with the left leg of another, in such a manner that the two legs are fastened close together, and then the iron band is welded.

This was done. and yet on the morrow. the executioner

on visiting their cell, found it empty, and no one knew how they had escaped. The two brothers, as soon as they were free from the prison enclosure, made unavailing efforts to cut or pry off their cumbersome ornament, but finding it impossible, fled across the country, avoiding as much as possible the frequented paths. When daylight came they hid themselves in the rocks, and only resumed their flight with the evening, being lighted on their way by the faint rays of a crescent moon, and the bright hope of freedom. Thus they had already travelled a long distance, when, in the middle of the second night, they suddenly came upon a lion.

The two robbers commenced by throwing stones at him, and calling out as loud as they were able, in order to make him flee, but the animal crouched down before them and did not move. Seeing that the stones and menaces were of no avail, the frightened men commenced their prayers; but before they were finished, the lion sprang upon them, and throwing them to the ground, devoured the elder while still chained to the body of his younger brother. The living man, as he heard the lessening moans of his relative, and the craunching of the lion at his hideous meal, had no trouble in counterfeiting death, but swooned where he fell. When the animal had eaten the body down to the shackle, finding a substance he could not masticate, he bit off the leg of the brother he was eating below the knee, leaving the lower part of the limb still confined in the iron link. Then, either from thirst or from being satisfied with what he had eaten, he left the living man, and walked down to a brook, a little distance off.

The poor devil, once alone, sprang to his feet and dragging

with him the mangled limb, crept into a crevice of a rock that he was fortunate enough to discover.

A few moments after, the insatiate beast arrived on his track, roaring with anger, and passed around and above the hole in which he had sought refuge, but being unable to reach his prey, he left for the woods with the first dawning of the day.

The trembling fugitive, a second time saved, crawled out of his hiding-place to renew his flight, when he was captured by some of the horsemen of the Bey, who had been following his traces, who, putting him on the crupper of the saddle, carried him back to Constantine, where he was again thrown into prison. The Bey, astonished at the tale his soldiers brought back to him, ordered the man in his presence to certify to the truth of the story, and the culprit was led out, still dragging after him the leg of his brother. Ahmed Bey was so moved by the strange spectacle and wild narrative, that, although bearing the reputation of a cruel ruler, he ordered the *entrave* broken, and the prisoner to be set at liberty.

Although the lion of Algiers is endowed with great speed, and an unequalled agility, yet he is never known to chase his prey. Sometimes when he sees either a single boar, or a herd of wild hogs, he will steal forward with the tread of a cat to surprise them; but the moment he is heard or discovered, the black brutes scamper away; and he, giving up the chase, walks down to the plain to select his supper in the Arab enclosures, which he finds infinitely more to his taste, and, at the same time, more certain. I have sometimes

seen a troop of wild hogs suddenly quit a neighborhood in the middle of the day, where one of their friends had been munched up; but I have often seen the lion and the hogs residing in the same forest without paying any attention to each other.

I have had occasion during many a night to study the voice of the lion, and I will give to my readers my impressions and experience upon this subject.

When a lion and a lioness are together, the female always roars first and at the moment when the couple is leaving its lair. The roar is composed of a dozen distinct sounds which are commenced by low sighing, and then go on *crescendo* and finish as they began, leaving an interval of a few seconds between each sound; the lion then alternates with the lioness. They roar in that manner every quarter of an hour up to the moment when they approach the encampment that they are about to attack, when they both keep silence but after they have taken and eaten their food they recommence their melancholy music and continue it until morning.

A solitary lion generally roars as he rises from his slumber at the commencement of the night, and will often continue his thundering challenges without cessation until he reaches the encampments. During the great heats of summer the lion roars but little, and sometimes not at all; but as the season of his amours advances he makes up for the time lost in silence. The Arabs, whose language is rich in comparisons, have but one word for the roaring of the lion, and that is *rad*, thunder.

Among other foolish questions I have had asked me, is

"Why does the lion roar?" I would say that the roaring of the lion is to him what to the bird is his musical song, and if the questioner does not believe the fact, if he will go to the forests and pass several years in his company, he may perchance find a better explanation.

I have fancied that the statistics made by me of the losses that the Arabs endure by reason of the visits of their leonine neighbors, would interest my readers and with them I will end this chapter.

The length of the life of the lion is from thirty to forty years. He kills or consumes, year by year, horses, mules, horned cattle, camels and sheep to the value of twelve hundred dollars, and taking the average of his life, which is thirty five years, each lion costs the Arabs forty-two thousand dollars. The thirty animals of this species living at this present moment in the Province of Constantine, and whose loss is replaced by others coming from Tunis or Morocco, are sustained by an annual cost of thirty-six thousand dollars. In the countries where I have been accustomed to hunt, the Arab who pays an annual tax of five francs, pays another of fifty francs to the lion. The natives have destroyed more than one half of the woods in Algiers in order to drive away these noxious animals, and the French authorities hoping to stop these fires that threaten to destroy all the woods in the country, have passed laws inflicting a fine upon the natives detected burning the woods. But what is the result? The Arabs assess the tribe to pay the fine, and burn as before. And it will always remain so until the government takes efficacious means to protect the people, as they have taken

in France, concerning the wolves, which have been driven away, although a much less dangerous animal than the lion.

The most remarkable points of character in the lion are his laziness, his assurance and boldness. As to his magnanimity I will say with the Arab proverb: *When thou goest on a journey, do not go alone, and arm thyself as if thou wert going to meet a lion.*

## CHAPTER II.

## THE ARAB VERSION OF HUNTING THE LION.

THE Arabs, after they have suffered for a long time from the ravages of the lion among their herds, are at length forced to guard themselves from his attacks and repay his insults.

Since experience has shown them that the gun alone is an instrument productive of more danger to themselves than to the animal they attack, they oppose cunning to his audacity, which is so great as often to cause him to fall into the trap prepared for his destruction. It is true that they bring the gun to aid them in their work of death, but it is only when the animal is made incapable of doing any injury, that they level at him their balls and insults. Before speaking of the tribes who, in open fight, from time to time, will kill a lion, and of the manner in which they do it, I will first treat of the simpler methods of chase that are practised by the Arabs without any danger to themselves.

I will place the pit-fall, or *zonabia*, as it is called by the Arabs, first in order, because it is the plan most generally practised, and the principal number of skins sent by the Arabs into market, are secured by this method. As I treated

of the habits of the lion in my last chapter, I will not enlarge upon that subject at this place, except for the purpose of explaining what is to follow.

In order to avoid the neighborhood of the lions, who are always to be found on the sides of the wooded hills, the Arabs remove their tents, and remain at a distance from the highlands during the spring, summer, and autumn. The lion never going abroad before sunset, the encampments established at eight or ten leagues from the mountain, are comparatively safe from his attacks during these seasons, as he always returns to his lair with the day dawn.

It is true that each tribe having a limited territory, there are but few that can remove so far from their dangerous neighbors, and therefore there are some tribes that pay all the contributions, while others sleep in peace.

At the commencement of winter the Arab population is forced to draw nearer the mountains, to gain shelter for their cattle and procure fuel for burning, and it is at this period that the lions, with appetites sharpened by the cold, live on the fat of the land.

In the countries usually inhabited by these animals, the Arabs, too lazy to work themselves, hire the Kabyles, who for a small recompense, dig a ditch of the depth of thirty feet, and from thirteen to sixteen feet wide, in the form of wells, larger at the bottom than at the top. This ditch is always dug on the upper side of the place to be occupied by the douar\* during the winter season. The

\* Douar, an Arab name, which signifies a collection of tents, varying from ten to twenty.

tents are arranged within the ditch, and a hedge is raised on the outside of branches of trees, and so placed that the ditch is concealed from those without. To prevent the cattle falling into it during the night, an interior hedge is raised, which encompasses the tents, and the evening coming on, the herds are gathered into the enclosure, and the herdsmen watch during the night that they keep close to the edge of the ditch on the upper side of the douar.

The lion, who is accustomed to clear the hedge with a bound, always coming for his greater convenience down the highest ground, arrives near the encampment in search of his evening meal. He hears the lowing, and scents the exhalations of the animals that are separated from him but by a few feet; he crouches for a moment, then springs into the air, and falls, roaring with rage, into the hidden pit, where he will be insulted and mutilated—he, the emblem of strength and courage—he whose regal voice made hill and valley tremble, dies miserably under the weapons of women of children, and cowards.

The moment that he cleared the hedge, and the frightened herds ran about trampling the keepers under their feet, the whole population of the encampment rushed to arms; the women shriek with joy, the men fire their guns to arouse the neighboring encampments, and the children and dogs make an uproar like pandemonium. It is a triumph that almost amounts to delirium, and each joins in the exultation, for each one has some particular loss to avenge. Whatever may be the hour of the night, there is no more sleep in the camp. Fires are lighted, sheep are killed for the

coming banquet, the wives prepare the couscoussou, and high feast is held until daybreak.

During this time the lion, who at first had made several immense leaps to get out of the ditch, becomes resigned to his fate. He hears all the noise, and the jabber of strange voices, and jeers, and laughter. He knows that his hour is come, and that he is doomed, without hope of succor from his kindred, to die amid insults and blows; but for all that he will receive the bullets of his foes without the winking of an eye, or a murmur of complaint, and die, if die he must, as he has lived, the bravest being from the Niger to the sea.

With the earliest light the Arabs from the neighboring encampments, invited by the sound of the guns and the hurrahs, pour in with their wives, children, and dogs, fearful lest any of the performance should occur before their arrival. It is a glorious thing to make an enemy suffer when he can cause us no more harm, and when we can strike and insult him from a safe distance.

It is to be remarked that on all these occasions the women and the children, but particularly the women, are the most cruel and fierce. Whether this is the characteristic of their savageness or a trait of their weakness, I cannot answer; but I hope it is not the same with the women of France, and that there are to be found among them, those who will sue for grace for the lion, if it is even that he may be attacked in coming out of the pit, fairly, face to face.

At last the day so anxiously expected dawns on the Arab camp with its circle of tents, and crowds of turbaned men, and

lowing herds, its tethered horses and barking dogs. Some of the boldest men approach the ditch, and pull away the interior hedge to get a fair sight of the prisoner, and judge of his age and sex. As the evil that he does is in proportion to his size and valor, so is the joy at his capture; therefore if it is a lioness or a young lion, the first comers move away, making faces of disappointment; and the others prepared by the displeasure they see on the countenances of their elders, take their places to see the captive. But if it is an old lion with a full mane, they give way to frantic gestures and cries. The news flies from mouth to mouth, and the spectators who are nearest have to take good care to save themselves from being pushed into the pit by the impatient crowd behind. After the curiosity of all has been gratified, and they are satisfied with casting imprecations and stones at the noble animal, the men take their guns and fire on him until life is extinguished.

Ordinarily after he has received a dozen balls without moving or groaning, he lifts his great head, and with a glance of scorn at his prudent enemies, lies calmly down and dies.

Some time elapses, and when he shows no more signs of life, several men descend into the ditch by means of cords, and attach ropes to his body to draw him out. These ropes have to be of great strength, for a full-grown lion seldom weighs less than six hundred pounds. After the cords are secured to the lion, they are fastened around a post fixed in the earth near the ditch, and all the strongest men in the camp draw the dead body, hand over hand, to the surface of the ground. After this tedious operation is finished, the heart of the animal is taken out and cut

into small pieces, and each mother of a family receives a piece to give to her sons, in order to make them strong and courageous. They pull out the hair from his mane to braid into amulets for the same purpose; and then after the skin has been taken off, and the flesh divided among all the people present, each family goes to its tent, where, when the evenings are long, the events of the day will form the theme of many a tale and children's lullaby.

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After the pit, the next manner of destroying the lion is the *melbeda*, which signifies in our language, a hiding-place, and of which there are two kinds, the *melbeda* in the earth, and the *melbeda* in the trees.

For the first sort of hiding-place, a hole is dug in the earth of about a yard in depth, and three or four in width. After covering it with the trunks of trees, and heavy stones, the earth that was taken from the hole is piled on the roof, two or three port-holes are cut in one end from which to point the guns, and a door-way in the other, which can be closed with a large stone from within. These kinds of blinds are built along a path generally travelled by the lion. As it would be difficult to take good aim on the animal while walking, a wild hog is killed and placed in the path at the proper distance in front of the port-holes, and at the moment when the lion stops to smell the dead body, the hunters fire altogether. It is seldom that he is killed on the spot. Generally after receiving the balls of his adversaries, he rushes with tremendous bounds in the direction of the

blind, and passes over it without suspecting that his enemies are under it; and then after a few useless efforts to discover his foes, he takes to the nearest woods in the neighborhood, to die of his wounds or recover in quietness.

Sometimes the Arabs who have wounded a lion in this manner, call their tribe to hunt him by following the traces of blood he left in his flight, but as such a chase always ends in the death of one or more of the pursuers, they generally leave the animal either to cure himself of his wounds, or die in his solitary fastness.

The blind in the trees is constructed after the same plan, only branches are used instead of stones to hide the hunter. A young tree is chosen of a middle size growing near a path, and the hunter fixes his ambush in the middle of its clustering branches, these blinds are usually permanent, and serve for many generations. It sometimes happens that when a lion has killed a beef or a horse, in the neighborhood of a camp the Arabs construct in haste a *melbeda*, from which to kill the animal when he comes to his prey on the succeeding night. Often, however, they have their trouble for their pains, for the lion dainty in the matter of meat for his own stomach, gets his dinner in other quarters, leaving the remnants of his first repast, like a royal prince as he is, to the hyenas, the jackals, and the vultures.

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There are in the province of Constantine, portions of three different tribes that hunt the lion in the open field. They

chase not only those lions that come into their own lands, but sometimes follow the hunt into the territory of their friends, who are decimated by the ravages of these animals.

These tribes are the Ouled-Meloul, living in the land of the Haractah; the Ouled Cessi, of the tribe of Segnia; and the Chegatma, a foreign branch that has settled within the last forty years in the limits of Ain Beida.

As the hunting of the lion becomes noble only in the proportion that the hunter bravely dares the teeth and claws of his adversary; and as the manner of hunting by the tribes of Ouled Meloul and Ouled Cessi appears to me to be much superior to that of the Chegatma, I will speak of these latter second in order.

The tribe of Ouled Meloul numbers about eighty hunters and lives at the foot of Sid Reghis, and on the southerly slope of Chepka. The Ouled Cessi, who have about the same number of men, pass the summer on the plain of Kercha and the summits of Guerioun, one of the highest mountains of the province of Constantine, which can be seen from the city of Constantine, rearing its head from the plain about twelve leagues to the south. In the winter they remove to another mountain, named Zerazer, about two leagues to the south of Guerioun.

The Guerioun seldom harbors a lion, unless it is some wandering sojourner who makes it a halting-place for a night on his journey, and continues his march across the plains on the next evening.

It is not the same with the Zeragar, which every year, when the Aurès, the Bouarif, and the Fedjovdj are

covered with snow, becomes the home, sometimes, of an old lion chilly with age, sometimes of a lioness in search of winter quarters for her cubs, and sometimes of a whole family. The Zerager is a mountain scantily wooded, but with its sides and peak covered with enormous rocks, whose crevices afford excellent lairs for the lions, being protected on all sides from the winds. At the foot of the mountain gleam the white tents of Ouled Cessi, and their numerous herds dot the plain as far as the eye can reach. As one may easily imagine, these are all the requisites of an agreeable home to the royal emigrants, it may be sure they will not readily leave it when contrasting their former hardships with their present ease, and while they see their old resorts covered with snow.

When a lion first gives indications of his presence, either by the robbery of the cattle-pens, or by the sound of his voice in the evening on the hills, the news is spread from mouth to all the encampments, although the knowledge of the presence of the new-comer does not prevent his eating their families before their noses for eight or ten days, and taking whatever he likes in the land. It is not until he has sensibly thinned the herds, and seems to have permanently located himself in the neighborhood, that they give the signal for the hunt.

These assemblages, many of which I have seen, are of the greatest interest to those who can understand the native dialect and appreciate the importance of the object that calls them together.

Instead of a beautiful park shaded with century oaks, or a hunting-lodge, which in France is the habitual rendezvous

of the gentry huntsmen, here the children of the desert assemble around an open fire kindled on the bleak mountain side. Instead of the beautiful carriages and brilliant dresses which attract the curious and impertinent, there come together quietly, from mountain douar or desert tent, about fifty men, whose united undress would not equal in value the livery of one keeper of hounds. Each one comes to the signal with his gun thrown over his shoulder, a pistol and dagger at his girdle, and takes his place in the circle that surrounds the fire. A dozen dogs, with long rough hair and sullen countenances, wander around the circle, amusing themselves with fighting and tearing each other, without their masters even noticing their battles. I have seen a dog killed and eaten by his fellows, without a single Arab present deigning to quit his place, or to turn his attention from the subject under consideration, though it should be added that this occurred at the moment that the spies were making their report of two old lions, whose traces they had discovered not far off.

The moment of the arrival of the men who have been examining the woods, is one of breathless interest—for they are not treating with a wolf, or a stag, or a wild boar that is killed by a shot from fowlers, who have taken the place of hunters in these later days. But the challenge is given to an animal that has the strength of forty men, the power of whose teeth and claws some of the members of the hunt are destined to feel; and many have seen exercised on the body of some unfortunate relative, seized in the jaws of death, from which all the valor and devotion of his tribe were unavailing to save.

Although the Arabs are very unimpassioned, it is easy to judge of their individual valor at this moment, and how each one will bear himself in the battle. I must render them the justice to say, that even among the youngest, and there are many beardless youths who follow the hunt, one never encounters braggadocios. This is the result, without doubt, of the fact that each one has to pay with his own life for any imprudence, and that those who have proved themselves unworthy, are forced to stay at home, the butt of the women and children, who do not hesitate to visit upon them their maledictions for what is most generally sure to occur on the hunt, the death of one or more of the hunters.

As soon as the men who tracked the animal have come in with their report concerning his sex, his age and lair, which knowledge they gain from his tracks alone, the hunters take the necessary steps for opening the attack. The trackers retire to one side with some of the old men of the tribe, whose white beards, and bent forms tell their age and wisdom, but who have for the occasion resumed all the energy of youth.

After a long council in which each one gives his opinion on the best plan of attack, they unanimously select one which they communicate to the assembly, and which is executed without opposition.

The guns are discharged and reloaded with the greatest care. Five or six of the youngest hunters are sent to the ridge of the mountain, with orders to follow all the motions of the lion, from the moment of attack to the final result, and to communicate them to their comrades by means of signs

agreed upon, which signals, although totally incomprehensible to the Europeans who do not have the key, are very simple to the natives. When the spies have reached the points that they are to occupy, the rest of the troop, with the trackers at the head, ascend the declivities that intervene between them and the place where the lion has hid himself. As the lioness accompanied with her cubs, or the young lions, do not follow the same course of defence when attacked, as the old lion, and each require a different description, we will assume the lion in question to be an old male, because he is more difficult to be killed, and more dangerous in battle than the young lions, and even than a lioness with cubs.

It is true that in hunting, an animal properly attacked is almost always killed or captured, but it is equally true that the hunter's success depends in this case, in addition to divers other causes, principally upon the manner of the attack. When following a hound, the hunter has only to fear lest the animal should take the wind and flee; but the man who is endeavoring to track a lion, as one may well imagine, has a hundred reasons for keeping at a distance from the rock or the hill under which the animal has crouched, and thus it is that he is rarely able to designate the exact spot where the beast is crouched.

The hunters, after arriving within gun-shot of the supposed lair, climb the side of the mountain as silently as possible, and come to a halt as soon as they overlook the cover. As the lion's sense of hearing is very quick, it oftens happens that he catches the sound of a foot-fall, or the rolling of a stone, and then he rouses himself and marches in the direc-

tion of the noise. If any of the lookouts sees him, he takes the skirt of his burnous in his right hand and draws it before him, which is a signal to the hunters for, *I see him*.

One of the hunters then stepping out from the ranks to communicate with the lookout, moves his burnous from the right to the left, which signifies, *Where is he? What is he doing?* If the lion remains standing still, the lookout answers by gathering the two folds of his burnous in his hand, raising them to the height of his head, and then dropping them while walking one or two steps forward, which signifies, *He is motionless a short distance before you*. If the lion moves to the right or to the left, he marches in the direction of the lion, moving his burnous either from the left to the right, or from the right to the left, as the case may be. Or if the lion is seen going directly towards the hunters, the lookout fronts them, and shaking his burnous up and down, cries as loud as he can, *Aou likoum! Look out!*

At this signal the hunters form in order of battle, all in a row, and if they can, they arrange themselves against a rock, so that they may not be attacked from behind. Wo to the luckless wight who has not heard the warning cry, or remains at a distance from his comrades. The moment that the lion perceives him, whether he is fleeing to the shelter of a tree or rock, or whether he is standing his ground boldly, and meeting his foe with his gun to his shoulder, he charges home with a bound. The hunter is lost, unless by a providence of God, he happens to kill the animal dead in his tracks.

As is seen, the tactics of this warfare are very simple.

They consist merely in opposing to the lion as many guns as he has teeth and claws ; but in order that the two parties remain equal, it is absolutely necessary that the hunters protect each other, that they never scatter, and that each one is ready to save the life of another with the sacrifice of his own.

When the hunters have had the opportunity to unite their forces, with their backs to a rock, the lion will march majestically before them, with a menacing air, hoping by this means to throw their ranks in confusion. If he should succeed in this, he bounds upon the scattered troop, which flee like sheep before him, and leaves two or three of its number under his paws.

If no one of the company moves from his place, and the animal feels their confidence in their own powers, he passes with a triumphant air directly before their levelled carbines, and within thirty paces from them, uttering a low growl of angry menace, and lashing his sides with his tail. This is the decisive moment. The word of command is given by one of the eldest of the party to fire. Each one discharges his gun with the best aim he can, and dropping his weapon, draws his pistol and yatagan.

It may seem strange to European sportsmen, that thirty balls fired at twenty paces against an animal that presents his side for a target, should not invariably kill him as he stands : nevertheless, it does not occur four times out of ten. The lion is so tenacious of life, that he does not die under any number of balls, unless he has been pierced in the brain or heart. If, however, he has fallen under this leaden hail

the hunters spring upon him, some armed with pistols, others with knives ; they fire at, and strike their fallen foe until life is extinguished, and the old lion gives up the ghost with his face to his foes, and his teeth and claws full of clothing and pieces of flesh.

The nearer the lion draws to his death the more dangerous he becomes. If during an action of this kind, but before he has been wounded, he happens to overtake a man, he overthrows him as he would an obstacle in his way, and the man gets off free with the exception of some scratches from his enemy's claws which are not of much moment, providing he was protected with a good burnous.

If, however, the lion should have been hit by one or two balls, he will kill or tear to pieces whomsoever he may catch, sometimes carrying the body in his mouth and shaking it until he overtakes another one, whom he in turn catches, dropping his first prey.

But if badly wounded and still able to reach a man, he will draw him towards him with his powerful claws, and after having turned up the face of his victim under his nose, will seem to delight in his agonies like a cat with a mouse. While with his claws he slowly tears away the flesh of his victim, his burning eyes are fixed on those of the fallen hunter, who under the fascination of their magnetism dares not beseech or moan. From time to time he will lick the face of the miserable man with his huge rough tongue, and then, wrinkling his eyebrows, will bare his teeth with the air of a tiger. In the meantime, the relatives of the victim, appealing to the company, the most courageous of the party advance,





"If may be, the desert matador can place the muzzle of his gun to his ear and fire, or it may be, the very next step he is dashed to the earth, and crushed to pieces without hope of help from his friends at his back."—PAGE 46.

side by side, their guns to their shoulders, and their fingers on the triggers, while the lion with a watchful eye awaits their coming.

As the balls that are fired at him might hit his victim, it is necessary to approach so close as to be sure of the aim, and it is generally a near relative of the hunter who undertakes this perilous duty, leaving the main body of the hunters at about a dozen paces behind him. If the lion is near his last agony he will crush the head of his prostrate prey as he sees the hunters approach, and when the guns are levelled at his head he will close his eyes and await his fate; if on the contrary he is strong enough to fight, he hastens to kill the hunter he has under him, and bound on the daring friend who comes to his rescue.

As it may be readily imagined, the rôle to be played by the new comer in the drama is none of the safest, for the lion being crouched on the body of the prostrate man, in a state of perfect stillness, gives no indications whatever of his intentions. It may be, the desert matador can place the muzzle of his gun to his ear and fire, or it may be, the very next step he is dashed to the earth, and crushed to pieces without hope of help from his friends at his back.

The Arabs only send one marksman to do this duty, as otherwise there is confusion, and by that manner the bullets might reach the man instead of his destroyer. It is true that the man is almost a corpse before that happens; yet still it is always hard to think that he was shot by his friends, and there always remains a thought that he might have been saved, if he had not been hit by these stray shots. Therefore

it is that but one man steps forward for the honorable duty. I would say, honorable, for he who can execute it with success and assurance, I would consider a man capable of performing the greatest deeds.

What we have seen in this instance is, however, exceedingly rare; the lookouts are generally unable to inform the hunters of the approach of the lion, and the company are obliged to seek his majesty, instead of being sought by him.

Ordinarily, the animal is lying down in his close covert, and if he does not move upon hearing the noise around him, he will remain completely concealed. Then he must be attacked in his fortress and taken by assault.

Whatever may be the bravery of the hunters who are marching so boldly to death, it is only in the last extremity, and when they are not able to come to battle by any other means, that they decide upon attacking him in his den.

When they reach the edge of the woods in which the animal is concealed, without the lookouts signalling, they hurrah, and call out to the lion, in terms of the bitterest reproach, so insulting that they think he must out to avenge it. If he gives no heed to the challenge, they fire several shots in the direction of his retreat.

These operations last sometimes several hours, and the longer the lion keeps himself concealed, the more the hunters hesitate to attack him. They know full well that he who remains deaf to so many insults and the reports of their guns understands well what he is about; that he has already been hunted, and knowing the danger of leaving his shelter, only waits until they enter it to rush upon them.

It can be easily imagined that the prospect ahead, caused some hesitation among the hunters, and more particularly among those who have already felt the power of their adversary.

While the Arabs, some standing and some reclining, are discussing with great vehemence the course they are to follow at the edge of the wood, I invite the reader to come with me into the dusky recesses of the thicket to see how the forest monarch is awaiting his guests.

Under the arching roof made by the interlacing branches of the wild olives and mastic trees, we enter several apartments destined for the use of his majesty during the different hours of the day, or temperature of the season. They are all shaded to a pleasant twilight, and the clean and luxuriant beds of fragrant leaves invite to repose. Here it is that with the dawning of the sultry day, retires the lordly tenant, to digest his meal or toy with his dusky spouse, and where, at the time of the arrival of the hunters, he was stretched on his couch, dreaming in the pauses of his cat-like slumber.

With the first sound that reached his ear, he listlessly opened his eyes in a dreamy state, without even moving his head ; but as the noise comes to him, more and more distinctly, he raises himself on his belly, and listens with an attentive air.

At the first hurrah of the hunters, he springs to his feet with a bound, and, shaking his mane, answers the challenge with a roll of thunder, that bids the imprudent huntsmen to tremble at having disturbed the rest of their master. Then

## THE LION KILLER.

comes the sound of a gun, and a ball ricochets from tree to tree, with a whistling noise, and he furiously rushes from his room to meet the invaders.

He hears the cries and menaces of the Arabs, and stops in his course, trembling with wrath and impatience. The gleaming eye, the dilated nostril, and swelling limbs, all mark the warrior's joy in the coming battle. He remembers having heard these same cries and assaults once before, and how he recklessly rushed out to meet the foe, to be received with a tempest of balls, the marks of which still remain on his body, and the past experience gives him prudence. So the voices call, and the guns sound in vain; he controls his ardor, and bides the proper moment for making the charge. With a restless step, he roves around his domain, now walking fast, with uplifted head and a long step, now pausing to listen to the gathering storm around him; and then he rears himself on his hind feet, and with his fore paws tears the bark from some tree, in long strips, as though it was a living foe.

So passes the time beneath the greenwood; while, on the open plain, the baffled hunters hold council how to bring the foe to terms, and whether to advance or retreat.

It is seldom that a party of this kind disbands without attempting the assault, if it is only for the purpose of quieting the ridicule of the women at the camp, or of saving the honor of the tribe, by bringing home one or more dead or wounded, in proof of their daring.

In these kind of conclaves, the old men are always the most prudent, while the young are reckless and ardent.

I remember an occurrence that happened in a hunt made by the tribe of Ouled-Cessi, in the month of February, 1850, and I give it here, if only to save from oblivion the names of these brave men. Being about to hunt with a man who had killed lions single handed, their emulation was aroused, and they called together their tribe, and not a warrior neglected the summons.

When we reached the hunting-ground, we found two lions entrenched in a close thicket of mastic trees, so small that from time to time we could catch glimpses of them from the place where we were gathered. Although I had decided not to accept the aid of this assemblage of Arabs when I came to the attack, yet still I was glad of the party, hoping at once to glean some ideas of Arab life and habits, and to show them the power of the *dog of a Christian*, as they call the French.

Before sending them on the heights to look out, as I usually did, I let them hold their caucus, and listened as earnestly as though I was to take part with them in their plan of operations. The discussion was long and tumultuous. The old men thought I should march in advance, at two or three paces ahead of the main body, which should be formed in a single line; the young men thought they should march at the head, with me between them, and that the old folks should form a corps of reserve, in case the lions should make a break in the first line. I let the different parties urge on their different plans to see to what conclusion they would come. During the argument, a young man baring his arm and leg all torn by a lion which he had encountered,

was crowed over by a young man in the assembly, who said :

"Ha ! those are only scratches. I could show you something more dreadful than that, if I dared."

At these words ; if I dared, the whole party turned in a moment, from the consideration of the greatest importance, and changing their air of solemn gravity, to childish hilarity, began to cry

"If he dared !"

"He will dare !"

"He will not dare !"

"He will show us !"

"He will not show us, his wife has seen it, but we can't."

All this time, the poor devil, all abashed and confused, turned around in the middle of the circle, desiring, but not able, to get out of the trap he had so unwittingly sprung. Turning away, I noticed standing near me, an old man and a boy, who seemed to be taking no part in the discussion around them, but who were talking together with great animation. At the first word I was able to hear, I understood that it was a father and son.

"My child," said the old man, "you know I am growing old, that you are my only son, and if you should meet with any misfortune to-day, I should die of grief."

"Am I not a man ?" replied the boy.

"Yes, you are a man," said the father, with a smile, "and I am proud of you ; child of my own heart. But your brother was a man as well as you ; nevertheless, he was killed by a lion last year, on this very mountain, and I was there—I

his father, at his very side, and yet could not save him. The lion's eye is fearful, my boy, when he is charging; a man's becomes dim in looking at him; his heart beats, and his hand trembles; and the shot, even if sped with a true aim by the trembling hand, may hit without killing, for the lion carries off many balls."

"But, father, why did you bring me here, if I am not to burn a cartridge? am I to return like a coward?"

"I let you come, because at first I did not know we had to deal with two lions, which makes the affair doubly dangerous, and then again, because I knew you wanted to see the lion killer, and I knew the tribe had taken up arms at his request. Stand still, look there near you, do you see him now, look your fill, and when you are done, and can describe to the people of our camp how he looks, we will go home again." At the words "we will go home again," the boy answered in a deliberate manner:—"You can go home if you wish to, father; as for me, I will stay, for if he sees me going he will think I am afraid, and I want him to know that I am a boy of the tribe of Cessi."

The father finding his son immovable, tried a strange argument. "Listen, you have been wanting a horse for a long time, come with me and to-morrow you shall have it."

"What good will the horse do me," cried the young man, with pride, "if they should say when they see me pass, what a pity that such a pretty animal should be ridden by such a timid rider!"

Being reduced to his last argument, the father said, "Come!

"I'll give you, besides the horse, the girl you love in marriage."

This offer shook, for an instant, the determination of the boy, but only for an instant, and raising up with pride in his glance, he replied :

"My father, you know that in our country, and more particularly in our tribe, the women despise a man who is a man only in name, and who is good for nothing except to beget children like himself. If I am of the tribe of Ouled Cessi, and the son of your loins, the woman who will marry me must be proud of me. Now this is my final decision, if you do not let me hunt the lion to-day, I not only will refuse your offer of wife and horse, but I will also leave your tent, and go away where I can conceal my shame from the eyes of my friends."

Whether it is the effect of the education of these half savage men, or it is an instinct imbued in their minds by the associations of their desert life, to produce so much bravery in a beardless boy, I cannot tell; but at least it is noble, and the reader, when entering on a dangerous hunt, would do well to choose such a boy as his comrade.

I put an end to the scene by reassuring the father upon the success of the day, and at the same time complimenting the boy for his courage. I then informed the company of the plan of attack I had adopted, and I invited the poor devil, who had been so mercilessly ridiculed by his comrades, to stay by me and carry my second gun, and gain a better title to fame than the mishaps that had occurred to his own person.

## ARAB FASHION OF HUNTING THE LION.

Hardly had the Arabs left the ground to take the place that I had indicated to them, before a lion came out of the thicket, and seeing me comparatively alone, walked straight towards me, the other one following him at about sixty paces in his rear. I was sitting upon a pile of rocks that overlooked the place, and which were accessible by successive ledges, cut up by crevices.

The Arab I had selected was at my side, holding my carbine at half-cock, ready for me to take it after having discharged both barrels of the one I held in my hand.

The first lion, in coming towards me, sprang up on the lower ledge of rocks, and then paused. I covered him with my carbine, and just as he turned towards his comrade, exposing his right shoulder, I fired. At the report of the gun he fell, then raising himself, attempted to spring at me, but fell again. I saw that he had both shoulders broken. The second lion came bounding to the foot of the rocks, with his tail to the wind and his voice sending vengeance to his foes. I fired as he was passing his prostrate comrade, aiming just behind the shoulder; he stumbled for a second, but regaining his feet, with one bound, was on the edge of the rock where we were standing. I seized my second gun from the hands of my trembling Arab, and fired at the temple of the animal, and he fell dead at four steps from our very feet. I then gave the *coup de grace* to the first lion and the battle was won.

Let us now return, without further digression, to the assembly of hunters preparing for an attack, and illustrate their usual manner of proceeding, after they are satisfied

## THE LION KILLER.

the lion will not come out of his lair. After a great many useless gestures and speeches, the counsels of the old men of the party have yielded to those of the young ones, and it is agreed to attack the lion, wherever they can find him, and as best they may.

Every one takes off his bournous, which he hangs on a tree, and pulls off his shoes, if he happens to have any, and the entire party, clad only in a shirt that comes down to the knee, goes forward frisking and capering, and treading on each other's heels, to battle against the lion.

There is the place where the lion has entered under cover, leaving his heavy tracks on the sand, and they must follow his trail without losing it for a single moment, so that the animal will be always in front.

As the woods are so dense, the party must march in single file, and it is usually some young dare-devil, who has never been on a hunt of this kind, that takes the lead of the column, no matter what his elders may say to oppose him.

Every time they come across an open glade in the thicket, they take the opportunity to form in order of battle, and invoke the lion to come out, and on his non-appearance, hurl at him whatever, in Musselman tongue, can be considered the most provoking. But the lion, according to his better tactics, though fully conscious of all these insults, retires to the thickest of the cover, and, crouching on his breast, awaits the proper moment.

The party again resumes its march, still led by the young scapegrace, who, presently stopping, and pointing to the track before him, says :

"The lion is not alone, for here are the marks of another lion, larger than the first one."

Then one of the trackers comes forward, and shows that they are both the tracks of the same lion, but the one is fresher than the other, and points to where he has crossed the first track, and gone to seek a securer covert. At length they find the traces so numerous and complicated as to be no longer able to follow them. Here is one trail going this way, and there is another going in an opposite direction, which is the one to be followed?

This is a difficult question to judge, for both are so fresh that one would think that the animal had just passed as the hunters arrived. The difficulty is so serious that they go back to the open space they have left, in order to debate the question, while one or two keep watch. Then the elders propose that they shall all go home, and come on the morrow with some wise man or diviner, to conjure the lion, and make him leave that part of the country. Others propose to build a fire at the edge of the woods, as a signal for assistance. Yet still the majority are in favor of a fight, and only discuss the manner of bringing it about, and whether it is best to follow one of these paths, or, dividing into two parties, to follow them both. After discussing the two plans, they adopt the latter, and commence the division of the company into two parts.

This operation is as shrewd as it is curious:

Instead of dividing the whole number of hunters into two equal bands, and placing men of equal experience in each part, as would probably be done with us, they divide them

selves by village, by tent, and by family ; so that if there are thirty hunters present, one troop would number twenty, and the other but ten ; yet these ten, in spite of their numerical, and sometimes personal, inferiority, will, nevertheless, be more effective than the other twenty ; because, they are all brothers, or fathers and children, or at most, near relatives, who can safely rely on each other in moments of danger. The two parties once formed, retire to the forks of the trail they left, and each follows a different track, agreeing to come together at the first cry or sound of a gun.

After having gone a little way, stopping ever and anon, to catch the meaning of different signs or sounds ; the party taking the right hand path meets with a tree all furrowed with the claws of the lion. Every one stops to examine it, and to give his opinion ; or, it may be, to let the left hand party have time to attack, if they meet with their prey, or to return if they have run out their path. But the others are following their trail without any difficulty or hesitation ; for at their head marches the famous Abdallah, the giant of the chase ; who, when a man is overthrown by a lion, is always by to rescue or revenge ; who, when there is a flight or a panic remains ever at his post ; who has been seen, after having discharged all his weapons, and broken his yatagan in the head of a wounded lion, that was crushing one of his relatives, to throw himself on the beast, and grasping him in his powerful arms, attack him with his teeth, and let himself be torn and wounded, still holding his own, until a ball has entered the temple of the lion, passing between him and the body of his friend.

While I am giving this hunting sketch, will the reader pardon me for digressing again to narrate an act, showing the pride of this man, who, though as poor as Job, was the model of a knight, *sans peur et sans reproche*? He was proud only of what he had done, and what he could do.

In the month of May, 1852, I was sent as mediator with French troops, who marched under the orders of General de M——, into the province of Kabylie, to quell the insurrections that had recently broken out. General de A. was detached from the invading column, with a few battalions, into the country of the Haractahs, and I accompanied the general, who was one of the most enthusiastic, and best hunters I have ever known. After a five days' march, we arrived and encamped at the foot of the mountain called Sidi-Reghis, which has the honor of being the dwelling-place of Abdallah, the charcoal burner.

As it was early when we arrived, the general wanted to try a little sport in the neighborhood of the camp, and I mentioned to him the name of Abdallah, and asked if he would like him for a guide. A messenger was, accordingly, sent up the mountain, and in a little while returned with our friend of sporting notoriety, armed *cap à pie*. After he had been received with the customary ceremonies in front of my tent, I asked him if there were many hares in that part of the country. At this question, he looked at me for a moment, with an air of astonishment, and then without saying a word, turned to a group of Arabs, who were squatted near by, and leading one of them forward to me, he replied,

with an air of utter disdain, while indicating the man with a graceful gesture,

"There is a catcher of hares."

"But you," I said to him, a little piqued by what he had done, "you are of the same place as he, and ought to know if there are any."

"I," he replied in the same frank tone, "I live on the mountain, the hares live on the plain."

"You say then there are hares on the plain about here?"

"All that I can say is, that I only descend to the plain during the night either to see my mistress or gather a sheep for my flock, and if perchance I encounter wild beasts in my path, most assuredly they are not hares."

As I hoped to present him to the General, and induce him to serve as guide, I cut short this conversation before witnesses and lead him to my tent. Once there we talked lion to his heart's content, and when I thought he had become sufficiently mollified, I explained to him what I wanted. I should add that he consented only with great reluctance, and he took such good care not to compromise his reputation, that the sportsman accustomed to come home usually with his game-bag loaded with game, returned that day with nothing.

I have not seen Abdallah since that time, but in August last while stopping on my way from the south, with the shiek of his tribe, I learned that Abdallah had again saved one of his kindred from the jaws of a lion, who, thanks to his timely succor, came off with only the loss of a leg.

But while we are engaged with the prowess of this hunter,

the rear of the party we left in the thicket has reached the end of the trail.

A fierce roar resounds through the woods a few paces ahead.

"Down!" cries a voice like the leader of an army, "Remember you are men, children of Cessi, and that I am with you."

Immediately the party congregate together around their chief, some seated, some kneeling, some stretched on the ground, the better to see under the leafy cover. Their guns are all cocked with the breech to their shoulders and the muzzle to their foe.

The lion has crouched to the earth like a cat, so that he can be more ready for the spring, and present a smaller front to his adversaries.

The men are so closely banded together, that a single burnous would cover them all.

It is a solemn moment under that pall of leaves, with not a sound in the sultry air. The lion and the Arabs, face to face, only a step apart from the wary beast, and yet they cannot see him.

Suddenly one of the men indicates with his finger that he sees the lion. His neighbor following the direction of his finger makes the same motion. Then they all lean forward the better to take aim.

One moment more of silence, and the woods will echo with the ringing of twenty carbines, but no—they are too late—the lion sees he is discovered, a crash of underbush, a short hollow roar, and he is upon them. He crushes the head of

one, and breaks the arm of another, and cleaving down the flesh of a third, with a bound is off in the woods again, leaving the discomfited troops without they having fired a gun.

Then follow the most deafening shrieks, and an uproar beyond conception. Every one charges his neighbor with the result of what has just happened, and the poor soul who first pointed out the lion, if he happens to have been neither killed nor wounded, is blamed and reproached as though he had said to the lion, "Come quick, now is the moment."

Then comes up the other party and they count their losses. One killed and two wounded. That is too bad! What, without firing a shot! This must be revenged. Where has he gone, the coward! And the party get so excited as no longer to listen to reason.

Very good, my braves, you need not go far to search the enemy, he will come to you. You have made too much racket here on his domains, you have injured his nerves, look out for yourselves, the day badly commenced badly ends.

And there he comes, or rather returns; stand clear, the lion charges.

In truth, the animal excited by the noise, and allured by the blood that he has drawn, comes crashing through the underbush, roaring with a heavy voice and with his head high in air and mouth open, charges upon the troops. This time the hunters are not taken unprepared, and thirty balls are buried in the living target. The lion crippled with wounds falls in the midst of the Arabs, seizing with his claws and teeth and tearing in pieces all that he can reach, until he

## ARAB FASHION OF HUNTING THE LION.

dies of his wounds, or is finished by a death shot from a pistol fired in his ear.

The animal at length being dead they turn their attention to the hunters who are lying under and about him. When gathered together and examined, they are found to number two dead and four injured, of whom two are mortally wounded.

We would regard such a day's adventure as very sad, and would have our attention more occupied with the dead and wounded, than with the lion, but here it is just the contrary. With the exception of the near relatives of the victims, no one notices them; but the lion—the lion is centre of every attention and admiration.

After having carried the wounded aside, and set the dead bodies against some neighboring clump of trees, a ghastly group, one or two men are dispatched to the nearest encampment to bring mules to transport them; then drawing their knives they all fall to upon the lion, and commence skinning and quartering him, all talking at once in their loudest tones, and recounting over and over the varied adventures of the day.

After this operation is completed, and the mules have arrived from the douar, the hunters form in order, and the caravan winds down the mountain to the plain. First marches the man who has given the *coup de grace* to the lion, covered with his skin. Then follows a mule bearing astride his back two of the wounded men. Then another mule with another of the wounded men, and holding in front of him on the mule one of the corpses astride in the same

## THE LION KILLER.

manner as himself, and surging from side to side with the motion of the mule. Then another mule with the other wounded man and the other corpse, and then the body of the lion quartered, and suspended by branches and surrounded by the hunters.

Arriving at the point of separation between the different douars, the hunters are welcomed by cries of joy and grief, by stamping of feet and hurrahs of triumph, and barkings, sounded by a crowd of men, women, children and dogs, who are awaiting their return. The men mingle with the hunters to gain tidings of the chase and accounts of individual prowess. The women rejoice or weep as their kindred or lovers have come back safe or wounded; and the children, in spite of their fears, with screams and laughter, pursue the man who runs around covered with the skin of the lion, and roaring with mimicked thunder. At last, when every one is hoarse with shouting, with weeping and barking, the party separates to take each one his individual path, and to try the hunt again on the first favorable opportunity.

It is after this manner do hunt the Arab tribes of Ouled Meloul and Ouled Cessi.

The hunting spirit of these people has changed very much within the last few years, and I will give a short history of the causes.

Before the capture of Algiers by the French, and during the dominion of the Turks, the Beys exempted these two tribes from the payment of all taxes, and gave them honorary titles for their prowess. In addition they paid them well in proportion to the number of men they had lost, for every lion

skin that was brought to the Pacha of Algiers, and these robes were afterwards sent as royal presents by the Pacha to the Sultan.

After the subjugation of the country by the French, these tribes came forward with their titles and exemptions received under the former government, but they bore no weight with the new rulers, and the bearers were treated and taxed precisely as the other tribes. But besides all this, when any of these Arabs brought to the French authorities the skin of any lion they had captured, the officers, regarding the gift only as the skin of a wild beast, without any thought of what it had cost the hunters or of its prescriptive value, handed out the contemptible sum of fifty francs, which was allowed by the state for such services, and informed the hunters that they might keep their proffered skin. The Arabs, indignant at being treated as mere traders in peltry, and estimating higher than this the value of the blood they had shed to earn the trophy, left the skin where it was lying, and without a word or gesture, retired proudly to their tents to hunt no more.

It is now only after having suffered for a long time, and as a matter of personal defence, that these tribes ever attack a lion. It has occurred several times within the last three or four years that they have sent to Constantine for me, and when they have not found me they have remained quietly idle for a month or more, allowing the lion to decimate their herds rather than take up arms in their own defence.

I neither praise nor blame the course pursued by the French authorities towards these two tribes, but I merely narrate for the benefit of the world, these facts, to illustrate the bravery

of a race of men well worthy of admiration and sympathy.

The tribe of the Chegatmas is a small branch of a people coming originally from Tunis, that followed the army of the Bey of Tunis when he came to lay seige to Constantine, and they established themselves on Mount Hamama in the country of the Haractah. When they are called to arms at the summons of their sheik, they bring to the field a hundred guns; and they are accustomed to hunt in the mountains of Hamama, Bou-Tokrema and Tafrent.

The details of the hunt up to the time of the attack, are the same as those of the Ouled Cessi and the Ouled Meloul.

The trackers build a fire at some gathering point, which serves as a signal for the tribe. When the animal is marked down, and his retreat carefully examined, the hunters noiselessly surround it, and climb up into the pines and oaks which grow in profusion on the hills.

When every one has taken his position they commence to shout from every side, and if this has no effect, they fire several balls into the cover.

The lion, accustomed to do battle with men, and not with squirrels, when he hears their cries and smells the powder, marches out of his retreat, and directs his steps with a wary tread, in a direction which he thinks will lead him to some one of his scattered enemies. His great eyes wander from rock to rock; his ears move forward and back with a watchful motion; and his tail is held stiff and rigid, as he advances, ever and anon pausing to catch the wind or sound of his foes.

Suddenly he hears a sound like the clicking of the lock of a gun ; without moving a step from his place, he crouches on his belly, and with his piercing eye scans every bush or stone that might conceal a foe.

At this instant his view is obscured by a cloud of smoke, and his ears stunned with the report of guns and the loud cries of the Arabs. His body pierced with a dozen balls, bounds and writhes like a serpent. While he is springing from bush to bush, the hunters, from their secure position, hurl at him their curses and bullets with equal force, until he catches sight of one of them in his leafy fortress, and then springing against the tree with desperate leaps, he falls at its feet, under the weight of the balls that pierce him, and yields his last breath with a far resounding roar of impotent rage.

No one is ever injured in this cowardly warfare, except now and then, on some rare occasion, when some luckless hunter has taken his place in a tree not sufficiently strong or high to resist the leaps and momentum of the animal.

So hunt the Chegatmas, but as their manner of hunting lacks the nobility and the danger of the encounters of the the Ouled Meloul and Ouled Cessi, so do they lack their reputation among their comrades, and their esteem with all true hunters.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE CHASE OF THE PANTHER.

THE panther is found in all the three French provinces of Africa, between the seacoast and the highlands, but generally nearest the coast.

There are two species; the same in color, but different in size. The larger species is about the size of a two year old lioness. Her relative, about one-third smaller. This animal has the peculiarities and cunning of a cat, with all its hunting propensities. Although, at first, its character and habits might be thought to resemble that of a lion, yet they are essentially different.

While the lion lives on the herds of the people among whom he dwells; the panther feeds on the products of the chase in the forest.

The one boldly descends to the plains, and takes his evening meal from under the beard of the Arabs. The other, not daring to leave the woods even in the night, follows the wild hog, the jackal or the hare; and not succeeding in surprising one of these, will make his humble meal on a partridge or a rabbit.

The voice of the lion sounds like a roll of thunder, and

one could readily mistake the cry of a panther for the braying of a jackass.

I remember a hunt in which I had the chance of making the acquaintance of this beast, and comparing his voice with that of the other inhabitants of the desert.

On the 16th of July, 1845, I was called by the people of Mahouna, in the district of Guelma, to free them from the presence of a family of lions that had taken up their abode in their country, and were abusing the rights of hospitality.

After reaching the place, while gaining all the information I could about the residence and habits of these importunate guests, I learned that they came every night to drink at the Ouled-Cherf. I immediately went to the banks of the river, and found not only their tracks, but a regular path they had made in their constant visits.

The family was a large one, being composed of a father and mother, and three children of full age.

I was standing near the brook, in the company of a dozen Arabs, and the lions' trail was a few paces in front of me. At one side lay a deep jungle, which according to the natives, was the covert of the royal family.

Old Taieb, the chief of the country, coming to me and taking me by the arm, pointed to the numerous tracks deeply impressed in the sand, and said :

"There are too many, let us go."

Already, previous to this, I had passed more than a hundred nights under the open sky; sometimes crouched at the bottom of a ravine frequented by lions; sometimes beating the forest paths, scarcely discernible in the obscurity. I had

encountered troops both of lions and brigands, yet, fortunately, by the aid of God and Saint Hubert, I had always come out of the contest in safety.

Experience had taught me that two balls will rarely kill an old lion ; and every time that I entered the field, I remembered in spite of myself, the past nights that I had found too long, either because the fever made my hand tremble when I had most need of its being steady, or because of an inopportune storm that shut out the objects around me for continuous hours. And I thought of moments when the roar of the lion had answered to the rolling of the thunder, so near to me, that I felt as if each flash of lightning was a blessing, and that if it would only continue, I would willingly repay the favor with the half of my blood.

And yet I cherished this loneliness from veriest love, and I sought it as a means of abasing the pride of the Arabs, who prostrated themselves before me—the Frenchman, not so much for the services gratuitously rendered at the risk of his life, but because he accomplished alone what they dare not do with their whole tribe.

Every lion that fell before my gun, and whose death I announced to the attending valleys by my signal fires, was a subject of astonishment, and they never comprehended how a stranger dare pass the night in a mountain-pass, that they avoided even in the day.

The Arabs are brave in war, and fearless in every position, except when placed before their master, who draws his strength, as they say, from God ; therefore the hunter is not obliged to awake the douars of the mountain with a distant

peal of triumph in order to obtain their respect. It is sufficient if he even leaves his tent in the evening, and returns at daybreak. It can be easily understood that this feeling of these people forced me to walk in the path that I had commenced; that it was a great relief against the emotions of the heart, sometimes too strong, and I do not fear to add against the anguish and loneliness of the night, in a country filled with every danger.

My national *amour propre* that caused me at first to enter into this career, having been once satisfied by repeated successes, I could have had the company of true and brave comrades had I desired it; but I became so passionately addicted to the darkness, the solitude, the danger and adventure, and so in love with myself and my gun, that I have passed many a night in the shadowy woods, until daybreak, even without hope of meeting game, and returned to my tent only with the day dawn, wearied in body, and exhausted in mind from the excitement of the adventure.

I do not know if there is one of my readers who will understand this feeling, for I did not myself, before I learned it by experience.

If one of my brother hunters will travel with me from evening till morning, during a whole month among these savage gorges, that seem made for the abode of the lion alone, and can there hear the voice of the lord of the desert, that imposes silence and terror on all created things, tolling the hours of the night, he will feel unknown emotions throbbing in his breast, and teaching him a new life; but the presence of one of his race will detract from the scene some

of its beauty, and from the heart some of its emotions, and prevent his tasting and perhaps understanding the feelings of the isolated hunter.

From the moment that the first star springs to its place in the evening sky, until the red flush of the dawning, the solitary man has to be ever on the watch to catch the slightest motion, to hear the faintest sound, to judge quickly and decidedly whether he is mistaking stones for robbers, if he is following a path or not, if the thicket at his side conceals a foe, to listen and detect if he is followed, and in a word to remember that death is around and about him in a thousand forms, and there is no help or hope from living man but himself. He therefore feels a constant emotion, and yet always has the readiness and coolness to fight a battle which cannot always save him, but without which he is lost beyond redemption. These are the reasons that made me love the chase of the lion alone in the wilderness.

If there is among the hunters, for whom these lines are written, any one who would wish to enter the lists in order to comprehend the joys which outweigh all fatigue, I would say to him : The road is open, enter it who will.

But away with the covered blinds and ambuscades which are used by the Arabs ! Away with the daylight hunt, either alone or with friends to drive away fear ! Wait for the night, and at the first roar of the lion set out alone and on foot. If you do not meet the animal, try it again on the following night, and the next, and the next, until you have succeeded.

If you should live to come back from this hunt, and I hope

you may, that I can resign to you my position, I promise you in exchange for the monument you otherwise would have received, a perfect indifference to death which you will thereafter be always ready to meet under whatever form it may come. I will promise you the esteem, affection, gratitude, and more besides, of an entire people, who are always hostile to others of your country and religion; and I will promise you last of all, the remembrance of scenes that will make your soul to laugh, and rejuvenate your old age.

But if you should *not* come back, which I should regret, both on your account and my own, you may rest assured that on the spot where the Arabs find your remains, they will raise, not a mausoleum as with us, but a stone, on which they will place a broken pot, some old iron, cannon balls, and a crowd of other things which, with the child of the desert, take the place of an epitaph, and signify, *Here died a man!*

It is well that you learn that among the Arabs a moustache and bearded chin do not make a man; but know also, that their simple epitaph, like the one I have given, has more meaning than many a higher sounding eulogium, and for myself I desire none other.

Please let this digression serve to relieve the monotony of the narrative I have left, and I will now resume.

The old Shiek Taïeb, at first insisted that I should return to the douar, and then that he should leave with me some of his men, who judging from the expression of their countenances as he spoke, seemed but little anxious to adopt the suggestion.

I refused both of these propositions, and urged the chief and his men to depart as the evening was coming on, and the lions might make their appearance at any moment.

The brave man prepared with regret to comply with my wishes, but before leaving, he asked my permission to say his evening prayer with his people, in order that God might have me in His guard during this night, in which not an eye would be closed on the mountain, but both great and small would listen with beating hearts for the sound of my gun.

There are those who have no faith in prayer; but as for me, and I would say it boldly, at the risk of the ridicule of atheists whose opinions are not worth the powder I fired away at sparrows when a boy, I believe in it with my whole soul.

The sight of these men of a wild and hostile religion, bending in prayer for a Christian, affected me sincerely, and I regretted that the rites I professed permitted me to join only mentally in a petition offered to the God of all men, in the forest and on the very spot where in a few hours I would be an actor in death's tragedy.

The prayer having been finished, the Shiek arose, and coming to me, said :

"If God hears our prayers, and you will reassure those who love you; after you have killed your enemy, set fire to the pile of wood that my men will gather for you; so that when our ears are trembling with the sound of the conflict, our eyes may be gladdened with the token of victory, and I promise you we will return answer to it."

I willingly agreed to Taïeb's request, and in a moment an immense pile of dry wood was gathered together, and arranged so that a spark would kindle it. While the Arabs were engaged in this work with an alacrity very seldom seen among them, who are generally laziness personified, the Shiek remained by me and said.

"If I knew you would not mock at me, I would give you an counsel."

"The words of an old man," I replied, "are always to be honored."

"Then listen, my son! If the lions come here to-night, the seignor with the big head (the Arabs give this name only to the adult male lion), will walk in front; don't pay any attention to the others. The young ones are so old that the mother don't take any further care of them, and all rely on the father. Therefore, I commend to thee the seignor with the big head, and, remember, if thy last hour is at hand it is he that will kill thee, and the young ones will eat thee."

His men calling to him at this moment, he answered them to go on ahead, and that he would follow, and then leaning forward he put his mouth to my ear, and said, "He stole my first horse and ten beeves."

"Who did that?" I replied.

"He did it," he answered pointing towards the slope of the mountain.

"But who is the thief," I asked, impatient at the delay.

"The seignor with the big head."

These last words were said so low that I could hear only

## THE LION KILLER.

the last syllables; but I divined his meaning and could not prevent myself from laughing outright.

A few moments and the Shiek had disappeared down the mountain path with his followers, and I was left alone by the side of the lions tracks, and in front of the mysterious lair which was already enveloped in the shades of night, and my eye ran along the different trails and endeavored to count the foot-marks imbedded in the sand, and my fancy pictured the seignor with the big head with his wife and family reposing on his couch in the jungle above, and measured the strength of my single arm with their united might.

The Mahouna gorge in which I was lying, is at once the most picturesque and the most savage of the African defiles. Fancy two high mountains running up to a sharp peak with their sides wrinkled by deep ravines, and shadowed by impenetrable forests of cork trees, wild olives and mastics. Between these mountains flows the brook of Ouled Cherif, a roaring torrent in winter, but in the torrid summer exposing its gravelly bed cut up by the paths of animals of every kind, that come thither to drink or bathe.

In looking at this valley from a distance it would appear to be inhabitable, and indeed there are found some families, who, when menaced on the plain, have taken refuge in this spot, as the only retreat against their foes, and a place to which they could never be followed. In spite of the ravages made by the lion in their families, they have never thought of emigrating, and when they take their annual count of their stock, they say so much for the lion, so much for the government, and so much for ourselves, and the share of the

lion is always ten times greater than that of the government.

The paths between these two mountains are so narrow and precipitous, that even the Arab scout cannot follow them without danger. The fords communicating from the slope of one mountain to the slope of the opposite one, are equally difficult, and the path frequented by the lions, who came down to drink, was like the other, a narrow defile between bluff banks. At this point, the Ouled Cherf forms an elbow which shuts out the view from every side, so that the place where I lay in ambush, was like the bottom of a funnel, and so embowered that the rays of the sun, nor of the moon, that other sun for me, never penetrated to it.

Since that time, I have passed many a night in desert-places, yet none to me has ever seemed so short. Seated at the side of a rose tree that overlooked the ford, I tried to catch some sound of the barking of a dog, or the lowing of an ox, or gleam of a watch-fire, or something, no matter how trifling, that would say to me, you are not alone. But around me every sound was stilled in the gloom of the forest, and as far as eye or ear could pierce, there was no sound or sight of human voice or skill; I was alone with my gun.

The hours stole by with noiseless tread, and the moon, that I had scarcely hoped to see, cast occasional bars of light through the foliage, giving a faint gleam that marked the outlines of surrounding objects.

It grew near eleven o'clock, and I was wondering at having to wait so long without any visitors, when I thought I heard stops under the trees. Little by little the sound became more

audible, and I distinguished the steps of several large animals. In a moment more, I caught the sight of several luminous points of a fiery red color, that were moving towards me. I at once recognized the family of lions, marching in single file, and coming towards the ford I was guarding. Instead of five, I could count only three, and when they stopped at the water's edge, at fifteen paces from me, it seemed to me that the leader, although of a height and bearing more than ordinarily imposing, was not the signor with the big head, whose appearance had been described to me by the Sheik.

They had all halted on the bank together, and were regarding me with a look of doubtful astonishment, when I took aim at the shoulder of the foremost one, and fired.

A roar of pain and anger followed the ringing of my rifle, and awoke the echoes of the forest, and the smoke obscured my sight for a moment, so that I could not see; but when my eyes could pierce the veil, two of the lions were going back to the woods, at a slow pace, and the third was dragging himself towards me on his belly, with both shoulders broken.

I comprehended at once that the father and mother were not with the young lions on this party of pleasure, and I did not regret it even for an instant.

After thus being assured of the flight of the others, I directed my attention to the wounded lion. I had just rammed home my ball, when, with a great effort, that cost him a roar of pain, he bounded up the bank to within three steps of me; a second ball in the breast sent him rolling in the bed of the torrent. Three times he repeated the attack, and three

times was felled into the ravine, by the fire of my gun; and it was only at the third ball that was fired directly in his eye, that the desperate beast fell over on his back dead.

With the first report of my gun, and the roar of the lion that accompanied it, I heard behind me, as though she been a delighted spectator of the conflict, the wild yell of a panther. At the second roar of the lion, following my second shot, another screamed from the left bank of the Ouled Cherf, and then another answered from further up the ford, and so through all the continuance of this drama, three or four panthers, whose presence I had never suspected in these regions, and whom I had never encountered before or since, held an infernal jubilee over the fate of a foe they had feared to attack themselves; and their sharper cry mingled with the thunder of the lion, and the report of my gun, to make the peopled forest like the theatre of a mysterious tragedy.

With one moment of pause after my last shot, to listen to the lessening echoes that died in the hollow gorges of the mountain, and to be certain that the lion was completely dead, I descended into the gully to look at my prey. It was an animal about three years of age, large, and full in flesh, and graced with teeth and mane that would have done honor to one of the patriarchs of his race; and I was well assured that he was worth my four charges of powder, and that the Arabs would hail his demise with a pæan of joy.

I then thought of the signal fire that the Sheik had prepared for me, and applied a match to the pile of dry wood, and sat down the while by the side of my royal game to await the result. Slowly the flames climbed from branch to

branch in the dry heap, reflecting from bush to tree-top, until they finally illuminated the dark slopes of the two mountains with a ruddy glare, like morning. Presently I heard a gun in the valley, and then a distant fusillade from the douar of the Sheik, the sign that my signal was recognized. The sound of victory was answered from douar to douar, till all the tents of Mahouna were ringing with the chorus of barkings and cries, and the rattle of fire-arms. All night I sat by my lion, and listened to the triumph that was answered from valley to valley. I alone on the hill-side, and all the country ringing triumph to my victory.

With the dawning of the day, more than two hundred Arabs, men, women and children, climbed the hills to see their fallen foe, and heap insults on his head; and the Sheik Taieb informed me that while I had been watching the young ones, the seignor with the big head, accompanied by his wife, had visited the plain and carried off from him another cow for their breakfast.

Although the history of this famous enemy of Taieb's has no relation to the history of the panther, which I am writing, yet still I cannot resist narrating the manner of his death, which occurred in the following year. Although scarcely a twelvemonth had elapsed since I had waited for him at the ford of the Ouled Cherf, yet the sum of his wickedness had increased to a dreadful extent. Horses, sheep, beeves and belated herdsmen, all followed the same capacious road, and still his appetite remained unsatisfied. One of the people of Mahouna, a herdsman named Lakdar had lost by his attacks, forty-five sheep, one horse, and twenty-nine beeves,

and then came to me for redress ; and I found myself at his tent on the evening of the 13th of August. On the 26th of the same month, Lakdar came to my tent, saying, "the herds have come home without the black bull, and I am going to see if I can find his body ; if I do, wo betide the robber that stole him." And he took the road leading to the jungle.

On the following morning about daybreak, on awakening, I found Lakdar squatted by my bed-side, with a grim smile of anticipated pleasure athwart his dark face. His burnous was dripping with dew, and his dogs that were stretched by his side were dappled with mud that was made by the last night's storm.

"Good morning, brother," he said, "I have found him, let us go."

Without a word of question, I took my arms, and we left the douar.

After a long walk through the forest of wild olives, we followed a ravine where broken rocks, and impenetrable thickets made our progress almost impossible. But after reaching the extremity of the woods, in the wildest part of the cover, we came upon the remains of the black bull. The thigh and breast had been eaten, and then the lion had turned the body over so that the whole side was uppermost.

I said to Lakdar, "Go, and bring me a cake and a flask of water, and let no one come here until to-morrow." After he had returned with my dinner, and I had eaten, I placed myself in position at the base of a wild olive, and within three steps of the dead body. I cleared the branches away

from before me, and placed them in such a manner that they would conceal my body from behind, and then awaited the result.

The day wore wearily away, the evening came on, and light and sound died away together in the forest. The feeble light of the setting moon just reached the retreat where I was crouched. I could only see the trunks of the neighboring trees, and the dead body of the bull, where a silver flake of light was gradually fading, and I listened with attentive ear for every sound.

Presently a branch cracked beneath the gentle tread of some heavy animal, and I took my position with my right knee on the ground, and my left arm leaning on my left knee, supporting my rifle. I gazed along the barrel, waiting yet hearing nothing more except the steady beat of my own pulse. Another moment passed, and then another in utter stillness. At last from within thirty paces in front came a hollow roar, gradually approaching as it died away. Then followed a guttural murmuring, which is the sign of hunger with the lion, and then a perfect stillness. I heard nothing more until I saw his immense head over the shoulder of the bull which he commenced to lick slowly, keeping his eye fixed on me. I took aim at his eye and fired. He sprang up on his hind feet with a roar, exposing his breast, which made a fair mark for my second barrel, and he fell over where he stood, directly on his back, moving his enormous feet backward and forward. After reloading, I approached him, and believing him nearly dead, attempted to stab him with my yatagan behind the shoulder, but a quick motion of his fore leg broke

the steel short off, and I was only saved from the blow by jumping quickly backwards. Two more bullets driven into his brain and the desert of Mahouna had lost its king, the seignor with the big head.

Now we will return to our hero the panther.

I have said that this animal lives by the product of the chase, that he follows in the jungle with the zeal of an ardent hunter; yet this does not prevent his seizing a sheep or calf that may be found wandering in the neighborhood of his haunts, and many are the losses the frontier settler has to undergo on his account.

The people of Ouled Yagoub and Beni Oonjenah of the Aures, say that when a panther has killed a sheep or other animal for which he has no immediate use, he carries the body up to the forks of some high tree, where it will be safe from the prying jackal and hyena, until the time of need.

The panther makes his home in the ledges of rocks that are frequently found in this country, and finds in their crevices or closely wooded clefts a secure retreat against his bitter enemy the lion, and becomes the terror of the families of porcupines that inhabit with him the ledges of rocks. The porcupine is covered with sharp quills from his tail to the commencement of his head, and when attacked suddenly draws in his head and raises his quills, becoming thus invulnerable to the most of his foes. But, alas, the panther out-herods Herod, and has a cunning and quickness that are more than a match for his well-armed prey. He watches for consecutive days the hole of a porcupine, and the moment the animal protrudes his head from his den, with one stroke of

his claws he clutches the head, and whips the body out of its retreat before the poor beast is aware of the presence of his-foe. ~

When I first hunted in Africa, I attempted to hunt the panther in the same manner that I hunted the lion, but it was not long before I found that I was on the wrong track. As the lion by night stands to meet or searches out the hunter, so on the contrary the panther flies and hides from him. I will cite an example of the cunning and timidity of this animal that came under my own notice in the summer of 1844, in the neighborhood of Nech Meia.

I learned that one of the larger species of panthers had taken up his abode in a ledge of rocks known by the name of Ajar Mounchar, to the great perturbation of the sheep and porcupines that frequented the neighborhood. As I was quartered with a detachment at two leagues distant, I immediately left my comrades, and came to the place designated by the Arabs. It was five o'clock in the day when I arrived, attended by a man from that part of the country to indicate the place; and as we rode up we saw the panther retiring to her den with some small animal in her mouth that looked like a racoon. I could have had a shot at her at a hundred and twenty-five yards, but I thought it better to let her retire quietly to her den, and take a nearer shot by watching for her when coming out.

After having sent off my Arab with my horse, with directions to <sup>come</sup> back for me at daylight the next morning, I softly approached the cavern where I saw the animal disappear. The entrance to her den was so

narrow that I could scarcely understand how an animal that was nearly the size of a lioness could have passed through it, and if I had not seen the marks of her feet in the sand, and against the sides of the rock, I should have thought that I had been mistaken. I noticed a mastic tree about ten paces up the hill that I selected as a place of concealment, and stretched myself behind it in such a manner that I could not be seen by the panther until she had got three or four yards from the mouth of her den.

It was about ten o'clock in the evening, when I heard several sharp and quick repeated growls behind me, and on the other side of the tree, and fearing lest I might be surprised, I turned my head to see what was going on behind me. Unfortunately, my gun struck a branch of the tree, as I moved. The growls ceased, and a hissing spit was heard, like that made by a cat, when at bay; then I heard the quick steps of a retreating animal, and the panther fled into her hole. I only caught a glimpse of her as she entered it. I waited till daylight without her daring to come out of it.

With the dawn of the day, I saw my Arab coursing over the plain, leading with him my saddle-horse, and I rode to the douar, with the promise of returning at evening.

I was at my post when the first star opened its eye in the heavens; but the night passed quietly away without any result. The panther once or twice put her nose outside of the rocks, but immediately retreated on the suspicion of danger.

After this same fashion, I passed ten consecutive nights alone on that rocky hill, without even the chance of a shot. On the eleventh day, a shepherd came to me to say, that he

had seen the panther about noon, drinking from a brook near the rocks. I immediately followed my man to the brook he spoke of, and without any trouble I distinguished the foot-prints of my friend among the numerous trails that crossed and recrossed the brook in every direction. Judging from the age of the foot-prints, and what had been seen by the Arab, I came to the conclusion the panther was in the habit of leaving her retreat with the noon-day heat (which in the African wilds, is an hour of solitude and rest to all the world, when man and herds alike, retire to sleep), and coming to the brook to drink and refresh herself.

The brook was shaded by trees, and hidden by thickets on every side, so that I could conceal myself, and have a near shot at her ladyship, when she stopped to drink. I acted on this plan, and in a moment was hidden in the dense thicket, with my view bounded on every side by the woods, which grew to the water's edge. Towards noon a perfect silence reigned in the woods, as though nature had fallen asleep in the sultry stillness. An occasional bird, or insect, would move by stealth, but slowly, as though languid with heat. Presently a covey of red partridges loitered down to the water to drink; as the hens were raising their panting bills with their first mouthful of water, the cock manifested signs of anxiety, and gave the call of alarm, and in a moment they had taken flight.

I watched for the cause. In a moment more a branch moved, but without noise, and then I saw the panther gliding lithely through the cover to the water's edge. Here she paused with her head turned aside, and her foot in air, like a pointer dog.

## THE CHASE OF THE PANTHER.

She might have been six or eight steps from me ; exposing her side with her head turned half away. I took aim between her eye and ear. The sight rested on the spot, I pressed the trigger, and the animal fell as though stunned by a thunder-bolt.

On examining my prize, I found the poor thing so attenuated that I immediately opened her to discover the reason. She had not eaten anything since the day she had first discovered a man with his rifle, awaiting her at the mouth of her den.

After this experience, I have always give the panther the credit for great suppleness and cunning, at the same time, that she is timid and inoffensive.

As the panther is endowed by nature with an immense muscular force, and powerful arms, one can attribute this cowardice only to an inherent fault in its organization, which makes it like those men who are formed like Hercules, with the strength of a race-horse, and the timidity of a woman who was made ill by her chimney taking fire.

The Arabs tell a tradition upon the subject, that is universally received among them, and which I give for what it is worth, without affirming it to be strictly true.

It occurred during the time when animals were endowed with the gift of tongues, which is a quite ancient era, as we are all well aware.

A company of twenty lions while making a voyage in foreign countries came to a forest inhabited by panthers, who anxious in regard to the sentiments of the travellers, sent a deputation to wait on the flowing-haired strangers.

## THE LION KILLER.

After the deputation had departed, had consulted and returned, they gave to their assembled people the result of their mission, which was in effect that the lions are great kings one and all, and had found the wood before them exceedingly pleasant in appearance and doubtless comfortable as a residence, and that they were about taking possession of it, leaving it of course to the present occupants to defend their home or evacuate it at their pleasure.

The panthers, indignant at this infamous proposal of annexation, so much more like the lawlessness of men than lions, decided at once that they would give battle, and take the offensive themselves.

In serried bands they marched forth, creeping and gliding amid thickets and rocks, to chastise the invaders.

The lions, warned by their outposts, roused themselves for the combat, and altogether gave a single roar, when the panthers, frightened by the thunder, fled in terror, leaving the forest to their foes.

Ever since that occasion, says this most authentic tradition, the panthers climb trees like cats, or burrow in the earth like foxes, and have never dared to meet in battle their foe whose voice causes all creation to tremble.

The Arabs and Kabyles suffer comparatively little from the attacks of the panther, so that it is rare that they give chase to it, and when they do it is in large parties. Some put themselves in concealment, others track the animal, and if it does not take refuge in some cave, it is always killed by those lying in wait. When wounded the trackers have to take particular care, for if pressed too closely it will turn to

## THE CHASE OF THE PANTHER.

bay, and as it defends itself with its claws like animals of its species, it fares badly with any one upon whom it springs.

The natives have a manner of killing the panther without fatigue or danger, and nearly all the skins that are brought to market are obtained in this manner.

When they find the remains of an animal that has been killed by a panther, or when they place a dead body in his vicinity as a bait, they let him come to it several times, until he has eaten nearly all of it. They then carry off all that remains, with the exception of a piece about as large as one's fist, which they leave as his last meal. This bait is then sewed with two or three threads that are attached to the triggers of as many guns, pointed at the morsel of food, and carefully concealed with brushwood.

When all is arranged the Arab lies down in front of his tent, and listens for the distant report of the guns that will tell him his ruse has succeeded, and he returns with the break of day to carry off his inglorious prize.

hyena extends his paw, when the Arab seizes it, and drags him out of his hole, then he muzzles him and hands him over to the women and children of the douar, to be stoned, as an animal too filthy and vile to die in any better way."

Without receiving all that my guide told me in its literal sense, I understood that I had committed a folly, which it would be necessary to repair by some striking deed, in order to hush the busy-bodies of the tribe.

The hyena keeps hid by day either in the bottoms of the wooded ravines, or in holes in the earth, or in the rocks, but as the night falls he issues forth to wander among the Arab cemeteries, which are never defended either by walls, hedges, or even ditches. Here he digs in the graves and eats all he can find down to the bones. When he is unsuccessful in such legitimate quests, he makes excursions to the douars, and devours everything around the precincts, in the shape of dead bodies, offal, and pieces of half-decomposed flesh.

The only living animal that the hyena dare attack is the dog, and as there are always two together, they conduct their operations after this manner.

After selecting a douar situated near to some woods, the female conceals herself, and the male goes wandering around the encampment until he attracts the attention of the dogs, who pursue him as he flees toward the place where the female lies concealed. When they are within reach, the female springs forward upon the most advanced of the pursuers, and then being joined by her male, the two together strangle and devour the dog at one sitting. It sometimes happens that the Arabs, not relishing this interference with the domestic habits

of their dogs, rush out and with sticks beat their intruders to death. But it ought to be observed that the hyena does not indulge in this kind of diet, save when he has fasted for a long time, and has not much chance in any other way.

I take this opportunity to correct a mistake I have often heard concerning the voice of this animal.

Often in the villages, and camps, and oftener still in bivouac during the night, one hears the croaking cry resembling the voice of a large dog who had contracted a severe cold, and then it is said, "Hark! do you hear the hyena?"

This cry is peculiar to the jackal, who gives utterance to it only when he is alone, and on certain occasions, as we will see in a subsequent chapter.

As to the hyena, he is too timid to howl, but he growls like a dog over his food, or in the rutting season, when several males are paying their addresses to one female.

Although many dogs will follow the trail of a hyena with the same zest that they do that of the jackal, that they hunt to the death; yet still I would place this animal in that class that should be killed and not hunted.

The Arabs say, "Vile as a hyena," and the Arabs' simile is a good one.

## CHAPTER V.

## HUNTING THE WILD BOAR.

THE wild hog is abundant in the three provinces of Algeria. There are two kinds: the wild hog of the woods, and that of the swamps. The former is larger, more sullen and dangerous than the latter.

In the commencement of the French occupation, they could be found in droves of hundreds around the towns and camps.

In the night, they destroyed the gardens planted by our soldiers, even at the very foot of the fortifications, and under the sentry's gun. This reminds me of the first boar hunt I had in Algeria, in which I experienced stronger emotions than in my proper vocation.

It was in the commencement of September, 1842, and the day after my arrival in Guelma, where the squadron of spahis that I had joined was stationed.

At the time when Guelma was still but a camp, the neighboring tribes were but little under submission to foreign rule, and our commander had been obliged to take measures for the safety of his men, and gave orders that none should pass beyond the outposts towards the south.

As this side of the camp was exactly opposite the woods, one hour after my arrival, I eluded the watchfulness of the sentinel, and passing out to the forest, found several fields covered with beans, where apparently the wild boars held nightly revels.

On re-entering the camp, I related my discovery to my comrade Rousselet, a cunning old war-dog, who feared nothing, and passionately loved hunting, especially at night, after the manner of the Arabs; probably because there was more hazard in it then than at other times. Rousselet heard my proposition with joy, and undertook to reconnoitre the least guarded place in the rampart, by which we could descend without breaking our necks.

About nine o'clock in the evening, we proceeded towards what my friend called the staircase, accompanied by another of the men whom we had taken in our confidence, and who was to amuse the sentry while we were occupied with our flight.

Everything succeeded admirably, and without worrying ourselves for means of returning, we dropped into the ditch, and as soon as we were in the open country, we proceeded to load our arms, which consisted of the regulation gun and pistol, and arrange in the most commodious manner possible, our other weapons, a cavalry sabre and a little hatchet of my comrade's, with a something between a bayonet and a hunting knife of my own.

These preparations completed, we entered the wood.

When we arrived near the field frequented by the wild hogs, these gentlemen, who had not expected us, scampered off in hot haste. As they had never been hunted, we did not,

however, lose the hope of seeing them return, and selected places of concealment, resolved to pass the remainder of the night in watching for them.

The field was separated from the woods by a little path made by the Arabs.

I left Rousselet to install himself between two bushes, and placed myself at three hundred steps further along the path, near a beautiful mastic, standing alone between the road and field.

The weather was calm, the sky serene, and the moon was sailing aloft, in undimmed effulgence.

At the moment I cocked my gun and pistol, I heard the trumpets in the camp sound for putting out the lights. From this moment I counted the hours by the cry of the guard, as it made its round, calling "*sentinelles, prenez garde à vous,*" which, in spite of the distance, reached us quite distinctly through the calm night air.

It must have been about eleven o'clock, when a tramping noise was heard in the woods on my left. At the same instant, a troop of young wild pigs, followed by a large and beautiful sow, crossed the path and commenced rooting about in the bean field.

As my companion and I had previously agreed only to fire when certain of killing, I feared to hazard a shot at forty paces, and waited until the game should present a nearer shot.

A little while afterwards, and following the sow and her young ones, appeared an old boar, walking slowly along, snuffing and listening each time he paused in his walk

The animal was scarcely on the border of the path, before he halted for a much longer time than usual, and then with a grunt he turned round, and fled in a great hurry. At the same instant the sow, followed by the young pigs, galloped across the path, and disappeared in the woods.

I was seeking in my mind for some explanation of the precipitate flight of the black beasts, when it appeared to me that I heard the sound of a voice on my right, and on the side opposite to Rousselet's position.

I then recollected that I had heard them say in the camp, after our arrival, that marauders belonging to the unsubdued tribe of Ouled Dann, came almost every night to the foot of the ramparts, to fire on the sentinels on the walls. Now, if my information was correct, we were exactly on the path of these gentlemen, whose conversation was becoming more and more distinct every instant.

There was not a moment to lose, it was already too late to warn Rousselet without the risk of being seen, and thus endangering the lives of both, if, as I judged from the noise of voices, there were too great a number of these troublesome fellows for us to oppose. Until this moment I had had my back turned to the path, but I wheeled round in order to have them before me, and after having placed my loaded pistol and naked knife in my belt, waited, with my gun to my shoulder, the course of events. \*

I had determined on the following plan :

The path was too narrow for two to walk abreast, and the bournous of the Arabs would brush against the mastic which concealed me, as they passed my retreat; if there

were only four or five, I would stop the last by dragging the skirt of his bournous, and before he could find out what held him, I would glide between him and those who were on before, and kill him with one blow of the bayonet and without any noise.

With one shot I could knock down a second, and perhaps a third, if they were in file: then, the surprise and panic aiding me, I could easily manage those who remained, if there were any who desired to do so.

If, on the contrary, there were a great number, I would let them pass, and try and conceal myself. In this case I would blow out the brains of the first one who perceived me, and burst, like a boar out of his lair, on the astonished troop, striking and killing my best, while waiting the arrival of old Rousselet, who would not be long in hastening to take part in the fray.

My calculations had been made, when I saw the Arab appear who was walking at the head of the troop. He was a lusty fellow, as tall as a grenadier, and with a face indicative of no gentle disposition.

He was armed with a gun, which he carried on his shoulder, and the raised lappel of his bournous permitted me to see in his belt the butt of a pistol.

Behind him came a string of his companions, which appeared to me extremely long as they were approaching.

When the chief arrived opposite the mastic in which I was crouching, he stopped in order to speak to his comrades, who were a little behind, walking lightly and talking among themselves.

I found out he wanted them to hasten their steps, and it seemed as if during the conversation he was looking at me the whole time. He was soon joined by the remainder of the troop, who, stopping beside their chief in the path, were so near me that I had only to stretch out my arm to touch them.

I counted them; there were fifteen. It is useless to say that I renounced my plan of attack, and only thought how to withdraw from the business in case I should be discovered.

Happily for me, the one who appeared to command the band, took up his line of march, and was followed by all the company.

Any one can understand how immeasurably long the defile of these fifteen men appeared to me, and I confess I felt considerably relieved when the last one had disappeared beneath the woods.

However, my comrade was now in the same danger, and I could not warn him of it. In order to be ready, in case my help should be needed, I left my hiding-place, and carefully followed the path without losing sight of the Arabs, who, to my great joy, passed by the side of Rousselet without seeing him, and on toward the fort.

They had scarcely passed the bush in which Rousselet was hidden, before I saw this brave fellow hasten forward to find out what had become of me.

After having pressed his hand and explained in a few words what had passed, we entered the woods to avoid a second meeting, and awaited the day-dawn before regaining the camp

The danger of that night did not deter us from trying it again, and many was the night we spent in the fields with much pleasanter results than dozing in the barracks.

In order to give an idea of the quantity of wild boars that at this time were to be found in the district of Guelma, I will mention that every day the Arabs brought many to the market, where they were sold for the moderate sum of five or six francs, and that I alone for my share, killed sixty in less than six months. Before the French took possession of the country, the Arabs, who are forbidden by the Koran to taste the flesh of the wild boar, killed them in order to protect their crops, but now they are killed for sale in the markets. Some native chiefs still continue to hunt them for pleasure, either by beating the woods or with dogs, and these hunts are the scene of brave feats of agility and daring as horsemen and hunters.

In France the wild hog never ventures from his lair until nightfall, and seldom dares leave the wood until very late. It is not the same in Algeria, where almost every day, when I was in the mountains, I saw either old boars entirely alone, or in large companies, leave their strongholds at sunset, in order to wallow in a stream so near my tent I could sit and watch their gambols.

In winter, they do not seek the water so often, but feed in newly sown fields, or on the site of an old douar, which they completely root up in order to seek the wheat that has fallen from the Arabs' trenches.

The reader can readily understand how easy it is to kill boars, after having once learned their habits. The native

manner of hunting them, is as follows : to go with bare feet up the wind, profiting by the inequalities of the ground and the trees, which allow one to approach without being seen, stopping when the animal listens, and walking when its snout is busy in the ground. In this way a boar, when alone, can be approached within thirty paces. It is more difficult when there are several, for there is always one who listens, in order to give warning at the least noise.

Almost all the boars in the market are killed in this manner ; but I advise Europeans to provide themselves with cloth socks, in order not to tear their feet on the stones and brambles, across which, the Arabs are able to walk as readily as they would on the grass.

Those native chiefs who hunt the boar for pleasure, choose the summer to hunt in the plain, and winter in the woods. In the three provinces of Algeria, there are a great number of lakes and swamps covered with reeds, which the boars share in common with the ducks and other wild fowl. When the water is low, from June to September, the wild hog takes refuge in some small bushy islands which have only to be set on fire in order to drive them out.

This duty is delegated to men on foot, while the horsemen draw up in a body on the plain, ready to fall upon the animals that the fire had forced to break cover. This hunt is full of attraction, and sometimes danger, when a strong old boar is driven into the open plain. It is not rare to see one, after having been attacked, attack in his turn, and rip up the greyhounds that are bold enough to try to stop him, or the

horse" which a clumsy hand has not been able to turn in time. I have been in this kind of hunt with both French and Arabs, and have remarked that the latter always carry off the palm.

It is not that they are better marksmen than ourselves, for I am convinced of the contrary; but it is because we pay a little too much attention to the horse during the hunt, while the Arabs forget it entirely, and load and fire as if on foot.

I ought to mention, however, that there are some officers in Africa who can rank with the most skillful and boldest Arab horsemen. Among those whom I have had the honor of knowing, and who are still in Algeria, I name the Generals Mac Mahon, Yusuf, and d'Autemarre; Dubos, commander of the Zouaves; the Captains Borrel and Sompt, of the staff; Captain de Bonnemain, of the spahis of Constantine; and Captain Marguerite, of the spahis of Algeria, with whom I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance, but whose reputation in hunting and coursing, is known by all the votaries of Saint Hubert in Algeria.

It is impossible to give a complete description of the many hunts had by these masters of the chase; they are numberless, and I do not fear to say, that they have killed several thousand boars.

Spring is equally good for another kind of hunting in the plain, and to me, a more amusing one than the preceding.

At this time of the year, the wild hog leaves the woods

very early, in order to seek for pasture and water together, where he will remain until daybreak.

The hunters, who know beforehand the time of the return of the animal, send skirmishers to the borders of the wood ; as soon as several black spots are perceived in the plain, everybody is on action, and each one manœuvres to keep the animals from cover, and prevent them breaking through the line formed by the horsemen.

A company of boars attacked in this manner, are almost always entirely massacred ; and these kind of hunts are so productive that, when the game is to be carried away, it is necessary to send several wagons to transport them.

This appears to me the most agreeable manner of hunting the boar for real amateurs. In order to hunt them in the swamps, the morning dew must evaporate, or it would quench the fire in the reeds, and the hunters, have to suffer much from the midday heat.

The chase in the woods must be directed by a skilful leader, and one who knows the country, or it will be without result ; and it is always dangerous on account of the fall of horses and men among the brush and fallen timber which at every moment present insurmountable obstacles to the best horses and riders.

The reasons why I prefer the kind of hunt above-mentioned which I call, *la chasse au rembucher*, are the following : first, the hour of the day so much liked by all European hunters, who call it the hour *between the dog and wolf*, and the Arabs, *between the dog and jackal*, is full of charms and softening

emotions for every one, even though he be not a hunter; next, the wild delight of hunting in these limitless plains, where no occurrence of the chase can escape the eye of the huntsman; and, finally, the uncertainty, which is always a pleasure, and the mind does not know beforehand the kind of game that will be roused, whether it will be a hyena, or a troop of jackals, night wanderers surprised by day, away from their caves, or whether the fierce wild boar. I have several times been present at a hunt with greyhounds, which the Arabs generally carry on during the moonlight nights. This hunt is conducted in the following way: At the time the wild hog is feeding in the grain fields, the largest number of people possible are collected, who are so well mounted as to be able by the middle of the night, to reach the plain where these animals have been discovered. The horsemen, in single file, are not long in perceiving the fugitives. The signal is immediately given, and all advance with cries and hurrahs, loud enough to frighten a bolder game.

In these hunts, I have remarked, that the old boars and the large hogs, that is to say, those who are well armed with teeth, will always protect the retreat of the herd with the sows and young ones.

I have seen some who, as soon as they were pressed rather closely by the greyhounds, would suddenly turn and attack them with the utmost vigor, while their comrades, availing themselves of the chances, make their escape. As soon as an animal remains behind, or comes to bay, the horsemen collect round him, and without paying any attention to each other

or the crowd of horses and dogs surrounding them, each one fires his shot, or lances his blow with cries and hurrahs, until the animal is stretched out lifeless on the plain, together, as it often happens, with some of his pursuers by his side.

“Holla, c’est bon !  
 L’ample moisson :  
*Seul, ce dix-cors*  
*N’ira pas chez les morts ;*  
 Et si son flanc  
 Est tout en sang,  
 Plus d’un bon chien  
 A vu couler le sien !”

*La Duchesse de Nemours’ Fanfare.*

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE JACKAL AND THE FOX.

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THE JACKAL.

THE jackal, like the hyena, belongs more properly to the omnivorous than the carnivorous species among which it has been classed. He lives at the expense of the gardener, whose fruit and vegetables he steals, and of the shepherd, who after the lion, regards him as his greatest enemy.

On unlucky days, he turns to roots, worms and clay, or searches among the refuse and filth around the Arab camps. The Arabs say, cunning as a jackal. In fact, this animal, a cross between a wolf and fox, is, like the latter, a cunning rogue. He will pass entire days behind a bush, near a stream, awaiting the approach of a covey of partridges. He profits by the moment when the dogs within the encampment are asleep, under the fatigue of having watched and barked all night, to pass through the sleeping crowd and enter a tent, from which he will take either a lamb or chicken, or whatever he may find suited to his taste. In the mountain he will follow a flock of sheep, and many is the one, that, straying

behind, is lost to its anxious parents for ever. In the night, he hunts the hare and rabbit in company with some of his comrades, who take up their position while he follows the scent, crying as loud as possible.

Not content with the profits he can derive from these different branches of his own particular industry, the jackal, which are without number in Algeria, and especially in the province of Constantine, joins the hyena's night maraudings, and lions, when they are out on a foray. The lions do not receive much benefit from the company of this parasite; but it is especially in their company, that the jackal gains the most from his sybarite life, and that without any trouble to himself. The following will explain how he gets invited into the company of the marauders :

Everywhere among the Arab population, there is a large class of marauders. These are young men, swift of foot, with a quick eye and great courage, who set out on the darkest nights, sometimes four or ten at a time, to take from their neighbors' flocks, horned cattle, or horses, or whatever they can steal—this is what they call night-walking.

The jackal having met a band of such gentry driving home the cows and sheep they have captured, instantly follows them.

Soon the chief of the marauders remarks to his companions that he had a poor dinner, and that a sheep more or less would be no great thing, especially as it did not cost much.

All being of the same mind, in an instant, the beast is cleaned, skinned, and fastened on a tree, before a fire large enough to roast an ox.

The jackal rejoices at the preparations for the feast, that in spite of the immense fire takes a long time to roast, all the while thinking to himself that he will be satisfied with the insides and remains if he is allowed to take them.

As he is paid no attention to, he wishes to speak; but a shower of stones explains to him that he is not invited, and obliges him to stand aside.

After the robber band are satisfied, and take up their line of march with their booty, the jackal leaves his post and seizes the remains which he finds very appetizing and sufficient for himself, and his fortunate companions who arrive at his first call.

These gentlemen find so much comfort in such meetings, that, from that day, the night marauders are always followed by one who never loses sight of them, and every now and then gives a peculiar cry (a kind of dry hoarse bark) for fear his comrades should lose their way and not arrive at the right moment. It is for the same reason that the jackal in following the lion and hyena, barks in this peculiar manner. From thence arises the general error in regard to the cry of the jackal, while following either marauders, lions, or hyenas, that his call is the voice of the hyena.

As the Arabs seldom travel at night, and never on foot, the jackal, when he meets one or a band of several men, thinks they are robbers. It has often happened, that one of these animals has followed me for a whole night, walking when I walked, stopping when I stopped, and barking, after his droll fashion all the while, even when he was not twenty steps from me.

In those countries frequented by the lion, the Arabs call

the jackal who cries in this manner, *baouêgh*; and when they hear him, will light fires or fire shots to keep off the lion or robbers whom he is following.

The *baouêgh* is a great help while hunting a lion that does not roar. Thanks to him, I have been able, without leaving a ravine or ledge which overlooked the country, to follow the movements of the lion for an entire night, to judge of the douars which he had only menaced, and those that had paid to him their tax, and finally to know of his return in the morning to his lair.

In the level open country, the jackal during the day retires to the rocks and holes in the earth, or finds a quiet refuge in the bushes or jungle.

The Arabs hunt the jackal in the evening, or early in the morning at their going out from, or return to the woods, or during the day, by beating the bushes in order to make them pass from one wood to another, letting loose the greyhounds when they break cover.

Though the jackal is not swift, the chase cannot but be amusing, because he defends himself with courage; in fact, many greyhounds fear him more than the boar.

I advise Europeans who have two or three couples of hunting dogs, and who hunt for the love of the sport, to put them on the trail of the jackal, which they take in preference to any other; this hunt is the more agreeable as the chase lasts frequently three or four hours; the animal making great runs, yet the hounds never get at fault. It is important before starting him, to stop up his holes, as is practised in France for foxes.

## THE FOX.

The African fox is but half the size of his European brother. He inhabits the open plains, where he digs large and deep holes in the sides of the brooks and in the pits left by the Arabs. This animal is not as troublesome here as among us; it is only now and then he will dare to steal a chicken, but lives entirely on the proceeds of his hunting, that is to say, on little birds, jerboas, lizards and serpents.

The Arabs hunt them with greyhounds at daybreak in the morning, when they are late in crossing the plain to return to their hiding-places. This chase has no great interest for me, but I think for Europeans who like ferret hunting, it would be more agreeable, and they could practise it with success, using terrier dogs instead of ferrets, the terriers being used in the same manner for the fox, that the ferret is employed for the rabbit.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE DEER, ANTELOPE AND GAZEL.

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THE DEER.

THE African Deer is not as large as his brethren in France, and has a deeper color and rougher coat. They are only found in the province of Constantine and three districts to the east: those of Bone, Calle and Tebessa.

In the first, the deer inhabit the Beni-Salah and Ouled-Bechiah mountains, which are covered with magnificent forests of evergreen and live oaks; in the second, they are found on the borders of the lakes situated near the sea-coast; in the third, they have taken up their abode in a pine forest which the Arabs call *Ghit-Choueni* (Robber's wood), which is enclosed by three mountains, forming a triangle—the Ouenza on the east, the Bou Kradera on the south, and the Guelf on the west.

The forest is on a level plain, and though without any paths, makes very good hunting ground. I have hunted deer in it in company with the Mahatlah and Ouled-Sidi-Abid tribes with greyhounds that chase down the game, and hold them at bay until we arrive to finish them with a ball.

I think with a set of hunting-dogs the deer might be pursued the same way in this country as in France.

Two or three times hunting these animals is sufficient to learn their general run-ways, in order to place relays; numerous cleared spaces renders the task of turning the deer which is selected an easy one.

It is not the same with the woods we spoke of first, which are impracticable for a huntsman, the country being uneven and thickly wooded.

In these regions the Arabs kill the deer at the time of rutting, approaching near them under cover of the grass and mastics, which are very high and thick. During fine weather they watch for them in the night, when they pasture in the barley and cornfields.

I knew an Arab living at Borj-ali-Bey, half way between Bone and Calle, who has killed more than a hundred deer in this way. I mention him as an excellent guide for the hunter, whose fancy may lead him in the direction of these hunting-grounds.

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#### THE ANTELOPE.

The Antelope, which the Arabs call *Bagar-Ouerch* or *Fechtäl*, according to the localities, is as nomadic in its life as the southern tribes which they follow. In the spring, summer and autumn, they are found on the high plateaux which border the Saharah on the north, and at the first touch of cold weather, they descend to the sandy country. These

mammiferous animals wander in flocks of several hundred and always in an open country. Their swiftness and bottom are so great that there are no greyhounds able to reach them, or horses strong enough to hunt them.

When they see but a small number of horsemen on the plain, instead of flying they slowly approach, led by a male who appears to be the chief of the herd, then they file off at a trot, sometimes at thirty or forty paces from the horsemen, who can send but one shot among them during this manœuvre, for at the first sound the herds fly off with the swiftness of the simoon. When the Arabs want to hunt the antelope, they collect all the horsemen of their tribe, and proceed to the place frequented by the animal. The greater part of the troop dismount in some place where they can conceal themselves, whilst the spies go forward to reconnoitre the herd.

If they report that the herd is large, and composed principally of young antelopes and females, a relay is formed to occupy the run-ways. When the troop that is to attack judge the right moment has come they approach the antelopes at first slowly, then on a trot, and finally charge at full speed on the traces of the flying animals.

It is seldom before reaching the relays that a beast falls behind and is killed. Until then the flock flies in perfect order, the males bringing up the rear and pushing before them the females and fawns; but when they see, as if coming out of the earth, thirty to forty new horsemen, shrieking like madmen, the animals who are too heavy, or who are too weak in the legs; that is to say, the females and fawns,

becoming confused, and in spite of the blows from the horns of the males, who are anxious to save them, are distanced by the remainder of the flock and soon surrounded by the horsemen, who shoot or spear them in great numbers.

If the spies have found a small herd, or one in which there are but a few animals capable of flight, all the horsemen manœuvre in such a manner as to enclose them in a vast circle which narrows little by little.

When this movement is executed quickly and by a sufficient number of horses, the herd is enclosed as though in a park, and become so frightened that they press and turn on each other in the midst of the circle, without even seeking an escape through the spaces left open.

This is not a hunt, but a real butchery. Often the horsemen being in too great haste to approach, do not keep the right distance, and the animals profit by the chance to escape.

This is a pleasant hunt as well for the spectator as the hunter. In order to practise it, one must be accustomed to handle a gun while on horseback, and not sink under the fatigue of the chase, which sometimes lasts an entire day, without counting the return to the camp, which takes half the succeeding night.

#### THE GAZEL.

There are two species of Gazels to be found in Algeria. The gazel of Sahara, which inhabits the sandy plains, and the gazel of the Tell, which is found on the highlands, and in the mountains bordering the great desert on the north.

## THE DEER, ANTELOPE AND GAZEL.

The first, much smaller and of a deeper color, is as wandering as the antelope, and changes its quarters with the varying season.

The second species never wanders further than about three or four leagues from his usual pasturing grounds. There are many herds of gazels keeping on some mountains situated to the south and east of Constantine, where I have met them for five or six successive years.

I have remarked one habit with this animal living in the north, which not only distinguishes it from other ruminating animals, but all quadrupeds living like it in a state of nature.

Every one knows that wild animals, whether herbivorous or carnivorous, turn day into night, and *vice versa*.

The gazel forms an exception to this general rule, by going to sleep in the evening, with the setting of the sun, and going out to pasture at daybreak.

The following is the way I came to know this peculiarity, which seems to me, to prove that the gazel is the most timid and fearful of all created animals.

While crossing the ravines of a mountain known in the district of Constantine under the name of *Zerazer*, I found on a high wooded point, a great many signs of gazels, with their sleeping places.

As this place appeared to me to have been frequented for a long time, and deserted only for a few moments, I thought that these deer must have been disturbed by scenting some beast or hearing a noise. Having found a rock some three or four hundred paces off, which overlooked the country, I

posted myself on it to pass the night there, and follow the roaring of the lion that I was hunting.

In the evening, at the moment the sun disappeared under the horizon, I perceived a troop of gazels walking in single file towards the abode which I had remarked. I counted them; there were six, with only one male at the head of the column. The chief of the little seraglio walked directly to the lairs of which I had spoken, scratched the ground two or three times, knelt, and then laid down to sleep. A moment after, and all the flock were reposing quietly around their miniature chief.

I watched until night without their leaving their beds, and when the first rays of the morning allowed me to see them, they were still there.

It was not until I arose to return to my tent, that the male awoke those around by striking his foot on the ground, and the females arose, yawning and stretching themselves like sleepy girls disturbed in their slumbers, and then they all marched off to their dew-covered feeding grounds.

Not wanting to disturb the poor beasts, I withdrew in the opposite direction, and could see them for a long time, standing on the points of the rocks, or winding down the mountain-paths.

This peculiarity which I had never observed before, clearly showed me that the gazel slept during the night, for fear of meeting dangerous animals; and what proves that there is no other reason for the habit, is that their abodes, instead of being hidden like other animals, are always found on high

ridges, or on declivities entirely uncovered, in order to avoid all surprise from marauding foes.

Without being certain in regard to the gazel of the desert, I believe their habits are the same; for, at the commencement of the siege of *Zatcha*, in 1849, I saw some which came every morning at daybreak, and every evening a little before twilight, to drink at a stream near one of our posts. The noise of the cannonade, at last, obliged them to withdraw and seek some other more quiet pasturage.

The gazel and lion are the two extremes of moral and physical strength.

The one is as timid as the other is bold, weak as the other is strong, beautiful by the lightness and well-defined delicacy of its form, and the mildness of its eye, as the other is noble by right of royalty given him by his Maker, by the proportions of his muscular body, full of iron strength and power, and by the proud calmness of his look, which imposes respect and fascination over all.

If the human species had not degenerated, the gazel might be compared to woman, and the lion to man; but if there still remain some women worthy of the comparison with this fairy, the noblest man of the age is a paltry creature by the side of the king of beasts.

Though the Arabs render justice to the personal beauty of the gazel, and especially to that of its eyes, it does not prevent them from hunting them with the utmost vigor.

In the South the gazel, like the antelope, is hunted with greyhounds.

If a herd surrounded by horsemen does not become alert

gether confused, it is only the young and females that remain in the power of the hunter; the full-grown ones always managing to escape, for their swiftness and bottom are superior to the best greyhounds. In the Tell, the Arabs beat the woods in order to hunt the gazel from one mountain to another.

Men hidden in the woods, or behind a rock overlooking the field, hold the greyhounds in leash, and when the herd pass near, let them loose without any noise, so that often several gazels are brought to the ground from fright or surprise, before making any run whatever.

The dung of the gazel, when dried in the sun and reduced to powder, is used by the Algerians to give an agreeable taste and odor to their smoking tobacco.

I think the animal so graceful and beautiful when alive, that I would rather see one living in its native grace, than destroy it for the pleasure of the hunt, or the value of its flesh, or the poor trophy of its skin.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE PORCUPINE AND SMALL GAME.

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THE PORCUPINE.

THERE are several porcupine hunting clubs and societies in Constantine, called by the Arabs *Hatcheichia*, because they smoke hatchich instead of tobacco. The members of these different clubs are of Kabyle origin.

Their name of *Hatcheichia*, that is to say, men who lose their reason by smoking, has gained for them the contempt of all the natives. In order to console themselves for this general opprobrium, they gather together every evening to smoke to the sound of tum-tum, and roar like beasts until they sink to the floor under the combined influence of sleep and hatchich. There exists such a rivalry among these different clubs, that, before the taking of Constantine, on the day of the Spring Feast, those of the El-Kantara, and those of the Jebia gates joined in bloody battles, in which defensive and offensive arms were equally used, and were equally productive of injury.

The French authorities have put an end to these meetings

within the walls of the city; but these gentlemen make up for it when they find themselves on the theatre of their hunting operations.

The *Hatcheichia* are passionately fond of porcupine hunting, which may appear strange to those who do not understand all the difficulties they are obliged to overcome before taking one of these animals. I will try and explain them to the best of my ability.

The porcupine is like the badger in its habits, only differing in the cuirass nature has given, in order to enable it to protect itself from the hyenas and jackals that often inhabit the same neighborhood. It digs its holes very deep, and always at the foot of a rock.

In the neighborhood of Bougie and Guelma, our soldiers took enormous quantities with snares made of brass-wire. It is probable that formerly some of these animals may have been found near Constantine, for the country is very stony, and filled with the dens of jackals; but the *Hatcheichia* have exterminated them, as there are no more remaining in that neighborhood.

It is generally about the end of winter that the porcupine hunters set out on their expeditions; they are obliged to walk several days before reaching the scene of their operations, and as the hunt sometimes lasts a month or more, and as they know by experience that their habits do not entitle them to Arab hospitality, they are obliged to make great preparations.

The evening before the day fixed for the departure, they collect in the hall of the club, and there they feast until the

opening of the gates. Those who have not the happiness of taking a part in the expedition, follow their comrades, who embrace them when leaving, as if they were never to see each other again. The hunters, generally about eight or ten, promise to perform wonders for the honor of the club, and set out preceded by one or two mules, laden with their implements and food, and followed by several couples of griffin dogs, almost always mangy. Each one is armed with a stick five feet long, at the extremity of which is fastened a piece of iron, in the form of a lance, with teeth like those of a sickle. This instrument is destined to fasten in the game, and draw it out of the hole. Hammers of every form and dimension ornament the belt of the most robust of the men, whose duty is to enlarge the porcupine hole in order that a child from ten to twelve years old, one of the smallest, thinnest and most elongated specimens of humanity, who, if he was walking on his hands and knees would resemble a terrier, could pass through the opening.

This little abortion is covered from head to foot with a dress of skin, which makes him appear like a spider, and forms a sort of coat of mail; he is, nevertheless, the hero, the great Hercules of the band, for he is the only one who attacks the animal.

After having walked several days across the mountains and plains, sleeping in the open air, under protection of the douars, that will scarcely allow them to camp at a gun-shot from them, they reach a porcupine burrow which is known, or which has been told to them by some of their country men.

They find some quills which show the presence of the porcupine, numerous and lately made traces, also indicate his general place of exit and entrance.

There is no longer any doubt of this hole being inhabited. The dogs being let loose, rush into the crevice, and, at the first sound of their voice, the hunters answer by a joyous hurrah, and arrange the implements which are to serve in the siege.

When all is ready to open the trenches, the biped is sought who fulfills the duties of a terrier, in order to reconnoitre the cave, but it is in vain ; he has disappeared with his lance, and they awaken the surrounding echoes by calling, with the most tender names, for the invisible one, on whom repose the honor of the club, and the fate of the expedition. While the hunters are sorrowing, believing him to be lost, the dogs come out of the burrow, with bristling hair ; then, behind the dogs soon appears a foot, then a leg and, in a short time, the body and head of the child, who throws in the midst of his companions a porcupine almost as large as himself, and alive, though pierced by the iron lance, in which he has fastened his sharp teeth, as if he would tear it in pieces. The animal having been killed by one thrust of the knife in his throat, his stomach is opened in order to take out the intestines, and replace them with aromatic plants, mingled with a handful of salt. This operation is to keep the body until the end of the expedition, so as to let it figure on the table of the club at Constantine. But it is seldom matters succeed so well, and it is not generally until after several days' siege and hard work, that the animal is taken, if taken

at all; for it sometimes happens that the holes are so narrow and the sides of the rock so hard, that in spite of the pin-cers, hammers and zeal of the workmen, the child, however thin he may be, cannot reach the furthest retreat of the porcupine, and is obliged to renounce the prize.

In this way these hunters traverse the districts of Constantine, Guelma and Bone. I have even met them in the district of Calle, sixty leagues from the point of their departure. Their expeditions are more or less fortunate; it sometimes happens that they will return with a dozen animals which will serve for banquets for many days, and sometimes after a month of fatigue, hard walking, and privations, with but one single porcupine.

When this happens, the members of the club unite according to custom, to celebrate the return of their brother, and the animal roasted, is served up on a wooden plate placed in the middle of the assembly, who form a circle round the table, contemplating it with admiration. The president of the club invites his right hand neighbor to help himself, who touches the edge of the dish with the fingers of his right hand, which he carries to his mouth, saying, "I have enough." All the guests follow his example, and regale themselves with the couscoussou and dates which are around the principal dish. Then they sing at the top of their voice, accompanying themselves with their hands and tum-tums, accounts of their past, present and future exploits, and the pipe fills up the pauses of the song. The club collect the next day, and the day after that, and so on, until the neighbors complain of the noise the *Hatcheichia* make during the night, and the

insufferable smell exhaled from the porcupine, which has become completely putrified, and at last the police interfere and turn out of doors alike the porcupine and his hunters who are obliged to close their session or find some other retreat.

*A propos* of the porcupine, I am glad to mention here an occurrence I witnessed, and which testifies to the correctness of what I have said in the chapter on the hyena. Having one day met a troop of *Hatcheichia* laying siege to a burrow, I hastened to witness the denouement.

After several hours' hard work, a hyena was taken and drawn out by a child twelve years old, who had lodged two feet of his lance in the body of the animal. European hunters would have been proud of this result; the *Hatcheichia* were disgusted and ashamed; disgusted, because in their eyes it was a bad sign, and ashamed, because the neighboring Arabs who had assembled to assist in the work, overwhelmed them with all sorts of jests and ridicule.

It is useless to say that the animal was left on the ground to serve as food for his relatives, and the hunters left the country in order to escape the jibes of the Arabs, and sought elsewhere better hunting grounds.

As there are only two or three expeditions a year, made by these people against the porcupine, in order to keep themselves and their dogs in practice, the *Hatcheichia* hunt the hedge-hog. When the weather is good, and the moon at her full, they leave Constantine in the afternoon, with several couples of griffins, and beat the plain all night. As soon as a dog takes the trail of a hedge-hog, he gives tongue and is

joined by the others, and all hunt together, as though on the track of a stag or boar.

As soon as the animal is taken, he rolls himself up like a ball, turning the prickles with which he is covered towards the teeth of the pack. One of the hunters takes him up with the lappel of his burnous, and puts him in his hood and then they seek another trail, and the hunt continues in the same way until morning.

#### SMALL GAME.

At the commencement of the French jurisdiction in Algeria, game of all kinds was so abundant, that a partridge was worth two sous, two hares a franc, and so on. The worst sportsman always returning with his game-bag full, and in many places the hunting grounds were only a cannon shot from our rampart when in garrison, or from the trenches, when in camp.

I remember one day, in September, 1842, I killed between breakfast and dinner, in the neighborhood of Guelma, forty-five partridges and seven hares with a dragoon's carbine. I will add that I am not a first-rate marksman, and I know some gentlemen who, with a Lefaucher gun, would have killed twice the number.

From continual hunting, game has become scarce around the villages and camps, and especially in the neighborhood of the towns. However, as there still exist in the provinces, and especially in that of Constantine, many places, distant from the centre of the population, where game of all kinds

abound, some good hunting grounds can always be found in Algeria.

In order to enjoy them, it is necessary to travel several days with an officer belonging to the Arab bureau, or a Caid. If it is winter, the hunter can camp on the borders of a lake where one can sow all his shot among the wild geese, ducks, swans and other aquatic birds which may be found there by thousands.

Those who are fond of game will find on the borders of the lakes, and swampy fields, legions of snipes.

In July and August, before the jackal and other hairy poachers have collected their tithes, coveys of red partridges may be found (grey ones do not exist in Algeria), whose ancestors have never heard a shot, and whom a touch of the foot is necessary to force to fly.

In the provinces of Oran and Alger, the rabbit is found in large numbers; in Constantine they are only on the western coast; but, in place of them, the hare is so abundant, that whenever our columns are on the march towards the east or south, the soldiers each day take large quantities in their hands, either during the marches, or when in the bivouacs.

The African hare is a third smaller than the same animal in Europe, and when hunted with greyhounds, never runs, or comes out of its hole, but hides itself in the ground when too closely pressed.

In spring and autumn, wild birds increase the sporting riches of the country to so great an extent, that some plains distant from the occupied points, appear as if covered with

geese, bustards, wild hens, plovers, quails, snipes and other friends to the sportsman.

Let the Algerian sportsman leave to the lazy sybarite, and the effeminate hunter, the gleanings around the towns and camps. The true disciple of Saint Hubert will reap the rich harvests alone and afar of in the mountains and plains, where the earth is stamped with the paths of wild beasts, and the air vocal with the rustling of wings.

## CHAPTER IX.

## HAWKING IN AFRICA

IN a country whose history is only written with powder and ball, it is difficult to remount to the origin of the manners and customs of its inhabitants, especially when, as with the Arabs, they live in the midst of traditions and beliefs, which, seldom reach beyond the limits of the tribe and present generation.

Thus, without being able to certify anything in regard to the origin of falcon-hunting in Africa, I will only mention that the Arabs, properly speaking, appear to have brought the custom with them into the country, since it is almost unknown among the Chaouia and Kabyle tribes who preceded them in the possession of the land.

Hawking in Algeria is the privilege of the noble and great. It is pursued with zeal by the descendants of the chiefs and military people who are attached to the French posts.

Whatever may be the power or fortune of a native, he cannot, unless he is of noble blood, or possesses a well-established renown for bravery, indulge in the pursuit of falconing, without the risk of being ridiculed and sometimes molested by his less pretentious neighbors. In connection with this

subject the master of the hawks to a Caid of my acquaintance, related to me a very interesting anecdote, in which he had, as we shall see, played a dangerous part.

This man, who, next to a certain Mabrouk, of whom I will speak some other time, is the most devoted falcon hunter I have ever met in Africa, merits the passing attention of the reader.

He is named Abdallah, and belongs to the Mahatlah tribe, and is one of the bravest horsemen of his tribe, which is not a small compliment to pay. One day I asked him how old he was. He answered he was born the same year as powder—which would make him about forty.

A little above the ordinary height, of a grave, taciturn manner, and thin, sickly appearance, at first sight this man would appear to a stranger in no wise remarkable.

But when he is seen in the company of persons of the same character as himself, and the conversation turns on the subjects of war and the chase, his face becomes animated, his eyes flash fire, and his nostrils dilate as if inhaling from afar the scent of powder and blood; for to him the sport of the chase is the agony of the victim whose eyes are torn out and head lacerated by the falcon; war, is the act of cutting the throat of a living enemy as he struggles beneath one's knee.

With these ferocious feelings which are inherent among all savages, Abdallah still possesses a sensible mind, and warm, kind heart.

His family is composed of an old mother, whom he loves and respects, which is more than the greater part of the Arabs do; three children whom he adores; and a mare, born

the day on which his wife died, and to whom he has given her name and transferred his affections.

Since that time, not only has he resisted the entreaties of his mother who wants him to marry again, but still wears, and has assured me he always will wear until his death, the badge of mourning for his lost wife.

In order to judge of the inconvenience of mourning among the Arabs, accustomed to ablutions as frequent as beavers, it must be known that it consists in never washing either the body or clothes. When I first knew this brave man, his wife had been dead six years, and as can be easily imagined, neither his person nor bournous was a model of cleanliness; but the interest I felt in his character made me pass over these little inconveniences to the senses, and I warmly welcomed him whenever I visited the tribe to which he belonged.

In May, 1850, I was collecting taxes on the country where Abdallah lived. As soon as he learned of my arrival, he hastened to visit me, and requested permission to come and see me in my leisure moments.

As it gave me great pleasure to hear his anecdotes of war and hunting, I told him I would willingly receive him, and I learned the next day that he had installed himself in the tent of my spahi for the rest of my sojourn in the country.

One evening when I had finished my work, and Abdallah with several native chiefs was seated in my tent, I called upon him to relate to me some anecdotes from his many experiences of life.

After having exchanged the customary salutations with my guests, who were his friends, Abdallah thought for some

moments, and then drawing the folds of his bournous around him like a Roman, related the following story :—

“In the year Algiers fell into the hands of the Christians, my Cousin Lakdar and myself conceived the idea of playing a joke on one of our neighbors, a sheik of the Ouled-Bou-Ghanem tribe, who, though a man of no account at all, attempted to raise and hunt with falcons.

“To accomplish our purpose we took two young eagles which we had found in their nests, and taught them to hunt the *nias*\* which our shepherds found in the rocks and brought us every day.

“When we judged our birds sufficiently instructed and well accustomed to the noise of men and horses, we sent a safe friend to inquire among the servants of the sheik, when and where his next hawking was to take place.

“Having learned the appointed spot and day, Lakdar and I set out before day-break, driving an ass before us with our hooded eagles and some falcons in case of need. Our destination was Oued-Mellègh, where we heard the sheik was coming with a great party to hunt the bustard that abounded on the plains thereabouts.

“The sheik and his companions did not arrive for a long time after we had reached the *Oued-Mellègh*, and as the tamarinds on the borders of the brook gave us a good hiding place, we saw the parties arrive without any danger, and as they deployed on the open plain, we regulated our advance by that of the hunters.

\* *Nias* are the young falcons found in the nest, and *lagards* the full grown ones.

"Soon a flock of bustards arose before the horsemen who were beating the plain; four falcons were successively cast off, and a large bustard was instantly singled out and pursued by the hawks with sharp cries and arrowy speed.

"Our eagles, freed from their hoods, were not long in perceiving the combat, and when their eyes were once on the scene we cast them off, and they took their flight, first slowly and in a direct line, then faster, and approaching nearer and nearer the bustard and his pursuers as they all gradually mounted in air.

"After having fastened our ass to a tamarind, we followed up the course of the brook, in order to have a better view of the combat.

"The bustard separated from the rest of the flock, and fiercely attacked by the four falcons at once, had no other resource but to keep above them.

"In order to accomplish this, she arose vertically to such a height that she appeared but the size of a pigeon, while the birds hastening after her, looked sometimes like locusts, and sometimes disappeared altogether in the blue sky.

"But fast as was their flight there were faster foes on their track, and our two eagles fanning the thin air with their great wings, climbed up above them and soon we could not distinguish one from the other, and only saw the group like a dark speck on the summer sky.

"The Sheik and his horsemen were assembled in the plain, their eyes fixed on the sky, watching the issue of this aerial struggle.

"Suddenly, we thought we heard distant piercing and

repeated cries; soon after we saw a black body increasing in size and proportion as it descended to the earth, sometimes struggling, and sometimes falling vertically towards the lower regions.

"We were then able to recognize our brave eagles, with expanded wings, allowing themselves to be dragged downward by the weight of the bustard, who, with hanging feet and broken wings, fell lifeless to the ground. We looked in vain for the Sheik's falcons, they had fled for ever. Our attention was now centred on the group of horsemen.

"At the moment the bustard and eagles fell hurtling through the air, into the middle of the large circle formed by the Sheik and his men, a loud cry of treason was heard from the band.

"We now remembered, that in the haste in which our birds had been let loose, the jesses had remained fastened to the legs of one of them. Several men on foot had laid their burnous in such a way as to take the eagles without being wounded by them, and thus they had discovered the trick that had been played them.

"We sought in terror some remedy for our thoughtlessness. There was nothing left but to fly, which we did as fast as our legs could carry us, without thinking of our ass, who, however, was destined to save my life in that day's frolic.

"For about an hour we ran, following the course of the brook and sheltered by the trees along the sides, when we perceived four horsemen about two hundred feet behind us, and a short distance from them were the entire *goum* of the Sheik

"They were all following fast on our tracks, some on horseback and some on foot, tracking us on the sandy soil like wild beasts.

"There was no longer any use in flight, and we turned aside to conceal ourselves as best we might.

"Lakdar chose a clump of tamarind and thorn trees, and I, leaping down the bank, ran into the water which came about to my shoulder, while the running vines and broad-leaved plants concealed my head from view from above. I had hardly reached this place of comparative security when I heard the voice of a horseman calling 'Come over here, we see their tracks in the sand as clear as daylight, there are two of the dogs together.'

"Immediately the clatter of galloping feet, and the sound of horses panting under their rapid course, came to my ears, and announced the arrival of the Sheik with all his men.

"'Let ten men go forward,' he cried, 'until the tracks are lost, and then stand still watching both sides of the brook, and then the rest of you my men, dismount and hunt up the brook until you find the wretches, and bring them to me alive or dead.'

"I readily saw that when this order was carried out, Lakdar's fate was decided. My concealment was better than his, and I entertained the hope that I might be preserved to revenge his fate.

"At this moment I noticed that the water, which at first was only up to my shoulder, was now moistening my lips, and my feet were gradually sinking deeper in the mud. It is said that he who has never any fear, is not human, and I am

not ashamed to say that at that time, I was right well frightened, not only by the near approach of the knives of my pursuers, but also with the alternative prospect of drowning in the water. I thought of my tent and my mare.

"I was suddenly aroused from my preoccupations by the report of a pistol, followed by imprecations, blows, and the sounds of muskets. It was the fusillade of my cousin, who finding himself discovered in his retreat, had fired his pistol on his foes and then fell, sword in hand, under their shots and sabre cuts. By a few words that I could hear amid the clamor, I learned that Lakdar was not quite dead, and that they were dragging him before the Sheik. Careless of the danger, and desiring, above everything, to discover what they were about to do with my friend, I was about leaving my retreat, when two men jumped into the bed of the brook.

" 'He came down here,' said the first, pointing to my steps in the sand.

" 'Yes, those are his foot-prints,' said the other, turning towards the border where I was standing motionless ten steps off, looking at him from between the leaves that covered my head.

" 'It is queer,' continued the first, 'there are no more tracks to be seen in the bed of the brook, can he have been drowned?'

"At this moment, I heard steps on the bank above my head, and a man called to the Arab, who was near me :

" 'Mohammed, the Sheik sent me to find you, because none of the horsemen have as good a knife as yours.'

“‘What do you want with the knife?’ asked the man.

“‘To cut off the head of the dog whom we have taken, answered the messenger.

“The thought of cutting off a man’s head was so pleasant an anticipation as to beguile the villains from their search after me, which relieved me from one of the most uncomfortable positions in which I have ever found myself placed.

“From what I had heard, my cousin was doomed to lose his head, and I could do nothing to rescue him.

“Persuaded that the men who had just left would return after the execution, and not being able, without leaving the print of my steps, to seek another shelter, I resolved to remain where I was.

“A root I could reach in the bank above my head, enabled me to raise myself for an instant, and take a position which would save me from the danger of drowning.

“After having heard the cries and noisy laughter caused by the triple execution which was taking place behind me, it seemed as if the horses were leaving the brook, and soon all was quiet in the woods around me.

“Time moved on with the waning day, and I kept my difficult position, until the sun sunk beneath the horizon. Presently the twilight mantled the woods, and the stars one by one came out in the sky, and still all was hushed and no sound came to my ear.

“I drew myself softly out of my retreat and carefully ascended the bank of the brook.

“I listened, and looked around me; nothing in sight, no noise, except the croaking of frogs; no living being, except

some jackals wandering around the corpse of Lakdar, which I found horribly mutilated and lying with our two eagles, beheaded one on each side of him.

"After having satisfied myself that I was alone, I wrapped the body and head of my cousin in my burnous, and placing it on my shoulder, proceeded towards the place where we had hidden our mule in the morning.

"I found him in the same spot, quietly grazing on the grass at the foot of the tamarind to which he had been attached. Binding my precious bundle on his back by means of a cord, I crossed the plain in order to strike a path which would enable me to arrive at the douar before day.

"I had walked for about four hours without meeting anything, all the time followed by several jackals, that attracted by the smell of blood, barked at intervals behind me, when my ass suddenly stopped short, raising his ears and trembling violently. On looking ahead of me, I perceived not very far off, two eyes like diamonds on our path.

"Accustomed to these sort of meetings, I hastened to cut the string with which I had bound Lakdar on the back of the ass, took him on my shoulder as before, and entered the thicket, leaving my poor beast motionless with fear on the road.

"When I had walked about a hundred steps, I heard something like the fall of a heavy body thrown violently down, then a kind of rattling in the throat, and then a total silence.

"The lion having accepted the sacrifice offered him, I was secure as to myself, and regained the path I had left, by making a circuit.

"Soon after, I met a party of our relations on horseback, who had set out to seek us.

"After having related my day's adventures, they wanted to proceed instantly and avenge the death of my cousin.

"I made them understand that there was not enough of them, that we could not leave the body of our friend, and, finally, that I was unarmed and on foot.

"A horseman placed the burnous containing the dead body across his saddle, another took me behind him, and we arrived at the douar before any one was stirring in the morning.

"On the evening of the same day, at the hour of supper, fifty chosen horsemen could have been seen spurring their steeds towards the *smala* of the murderer of Lakdar.

"The Sheik was holding a great festival in honor of the execution of the morning. The couscoussou had been served, and we arrived very *à propos* to take part in the feast. The dogs having given notice of our approach, we were met by some servants who had run out, astonished at seeing so many guests arrive at once.

"They were seized, and while ten horsemen were strangling them with the camel ropes they had in their hands, the rest of our party arrived before the Sheik's tent, and sabred the servants and inferior guests in the outer apartment, who were awaiting the remains of the dinner, and their share of the feast.

"From that moment I left my comrades to turn where they would, and sought for the Sheik, whom I wanted to kill with my own hand.

"The tent once gained, I was the first to cut an entrance

and spring within, sword in hand. Here I found seated immovable in a circle, the Sheik, surrounded by a dozen of his chief men. They read their fate, and never a hand moved. In a quarter of an hour after, their heads were ranged in regular order around the dish of still smoking couscoussou, and our fifty horsemen entered their respective douars with the day-dawn, driving before them immense flocks, and loaded with valuable booty.

"All this had passed without a shot, and almost without noise, so that the douars near the *smala* of the Sheik learned our attack too late to help him.

"From that day, until the arrival of the French put an end to our hostilities, many heads had fallen in both tribes, but I never afterwards saw any other falcons flown than those we cast off by the Ouled Mellegh."

As can be easily seen by this recital, the nobles and warriors in Algeria, monopolize the right of hawking, and the stranger will find it no very easy task to indulge in it.

The tribes among whom the best falconers are found, are, the Zmouls, Righa, Amers de Sétif, and the wandering Arabs who take up their winter quarters in the Sahara, and pass the three other seasons in the high grounds around Constantine.

The Arabs seldom keep the falcons they have used during the season, but generally let them loose at the end of February, in order to begin with others in the succeeding autumn.

In some tribes, the *niais* falcon is used; it is more easy to feed and teach, but it is less courageous, and more subject

to disease than the *hagard*, which is taken in the latter part of summer in the following manner :

After having reconnoitred the rock or ruins in which the falcon passes the night, a horseman comes early in the morning carrying a pigeon or partridge, the body of which is enveloped in a net in which the falcon is caught by his talons when he sweeps down on the bait that the horseman lets loose before him.

There are several kinds of falcons, which the Arabs distinguish by different names appropriate to each different variety.

Whatever may be the species to which the bird belongs, the manner of teaching it is the same. The education of the full grown falcon being much more difficult than that of the niais, we will not treat of the latter.

As soon as the horseman commissioned to take the falcon has seen him stoop on the bait, either in the air or on the ground, he hastens to take it before it is able to tear loose from the net in which it is caught. At the same time, he puts on the hood, which is to keep him from seeing, and jesses, to which are attached a cord about four or five feet long, in order to keep him from flying.

This duty ended, the horseman returns to his douar, carrying the falcon on his shoulder or head, without his attempting to fly away, the loss of sight having rendered him timid.

On arriving at the tent, the bird is placed on a perch a foot high, stuffed with hair, and covered with cloth, to preserve his claws from injury. Then commences the course of training. It is necessary, the first thing, to accustom him to the

sight of men, horses and dogs, to allow his hood and jesses to be put on and off, and finally to take his food out of the hand.

There are very few falcons that do not make resistance; some refuse all food for several days; others attack those who touch them with their beak and claws; and sometimes there will be found a few so intractable that it is impossible to train them at all. One thing very remarkable in this connection, is that the falcons that are best for hunting purposes are the very ones who are wildest during their education.

The surest means of subduing the bird, is to deprive him of light and food for several days, and accustom him afterwards to jump from the perch to the ground, and then to the wrist, in order to obtain his food.

When they are sufficiently accustomed to the sight of men and horses, the animal or bird which they are to hunt is shown them, and they are permitted to eat a little of its flesh after it is killed.

The Arabs consider warm flesh the best food for the birds. Falcons that have lost nothing of their savageness by being deprived of light or food, have been known suddenly to become friends with the man who has given them either a hare or partridge to kill, and to feast on the flesh with perfect docility.

After the falcons learn boldly to attack the animal which is shown them while on the perch, the lesson is repeated on horseback. To accomplish this they proceed to some open plain, carrying along hares and partridges, according as the birds are destined to hunt the one or the other. The falcons

are carried by the horsemen on the shoulder or head, hooded and restrained from flying by their jesses. When all is ready for them to be cast off, they are placed on the left wrist of the sportsman, which is protected by a heavy glove, reaching to the elbow.

The lesson is first given singly; while a horseman sets at liberty a partridge with the wings cut, or a hare with only three paws, the fowler unhoods a bird. It is easy to see that this trial determines the falconer as to the talents of his pupil, who, deprived of light and liberty for a month, suddenly finds himself free and in the open air. It sometimes happens that the falcon pays no attention to the hare or the fluttering partridge, but as soon as it finds itself at liberty, he escapes with screams of joy to that wild life from which he had been taken. Such birds are never regretted by true connoisseurs.

It must be confessed, that generally speaking, as soon as the falcon is unhooded, if it perceives the hare or partridge, it does not think of returning to its independence, but first satisfies the instincts of its nature, by sweeping on its prey, which it kills with a blow, and is then retaken and hooded. When a falcon is well taught it will soon learn to obey the voice of the falconer when he calls it, or the swinging of the lure, which is ordinarily the stuffed skin of a hare. After the falcon has killed the animal let loose before it, the falconer approaches holding the lure, which it well knows, and calling him in a peculiar manner.

This manoeuvre is to cause the bird to alight on his wrist or shoulder. If the bird remains deaf to the call, the falconer

jumps to the ground and approaches it, holding out the lure and letting it see some pieces of flesh which never fail in attracting it. When a falcon, either while intent upon its prey, or when lost in hunting, recognizes the lure, it is regarded as ready to fly, that is his education is finished.

As I have no intention of publishing a treatise on falconry, I refer the reader, desirous of knowing the rules in regard to falcons, to French and other foreign authors who have written all that a falconer ought to know in regard to the education of his birds.

I ought, however, to mention one fact which cannot but be useful to those who practise, or wish to learn, this knightly sport.

According to the authors who have written on falconry, the European falcon is subject to a number of dangerous diseases, in spite of the care lavished on it by its keepers. It is different in Algeria, where these cases are rare. I think there are three reasons which cause this superiority in the African falcon.

The first is, that Arabs very rarely use any but full grown falcons. The second is, that they are allowed their liberty before moulting. The third is, that in place of being shut up, the birds follow their masters in their travels, are carried on the shoulder; and when the tribe is encamped, they are allowed to pass the day on or around the perch, outside the tent, under cover of which they are brought at night.

It is generally in December that the education of falcons is ended, and they commence to fly. The northern Arabs

hunt the partridges and hare; those of the south the hare and bustard.

The place of meeting having been chosen for hunting the hare, the owner of the birds rides out from his tent, accompanied by his guests, and followed by the falconers and horsemen in his employ. On his arrival at the rendezvous, the invited guests come forward to kiss his hand, and then mount their horses.

On a signal from the chief, the falconers begin the chase, walking ahead in single file, while the horsemen skirmish around at full gallop. The chief and nobles who accompany him follow the falconers.

After the horsemen that are coursing around have taken their stations, which are generally ten or fifteen yards apart, all facing the same way, they march straight ahead at a walk, regulating their course in the following manner: the most advanced of the falconers, by the pace of those that follow them, who ought never to pass them; and the others by the progress of the horsemen on the extremities of the two wings of the squadron, who keep in advance of the line to regulate the chase.

As soon as the hare is started, the cry is raised by the one who first sees it, and each manœuvres in such a manner as to form a circle. At the same time the falcons are unhooded, and the best taught is cast off the first. Once free, the bird mounts the air in circles above the ring made by the horsemen, the falconer follows the direction of the hare in a gallop, and calls his falcon until he sees it swoop or hover;

it swoops on the hare that is running, and it hovers on the one which squats.

In the open plains the hares are so frightened at the sight of the falcon, that they usually squat when they see it. In either case, all the birds are successively let loose in order to support the first.

It is a very curious spectacle to see the falcons sweeping one by one over the hare, which they strike with their claws without stopping in their flight, while the horsemen waving their burnous in their joy, hurrah and gallop so lustily, that it would cause a braver animal than a hare to die of fear. Whether the hare runs or is motionless, the bird never tears him to pieces until he is stunned by the blow he has received, and no longer gives any sign of life. Then, by the master's orders, the falcon is retaken, rehooded, and the chase recommences.

As, when once satisfied, the birds become lazy, they are never allowed to eat any but the last hare taken; then they are permitted to eat their fill on the spot, to encourage them for the remainder of the season.

It sometimes happens that the hare, perceiving the falcon, takes refuge under the horses, and is followed by the bird. The chase then becomes full of interest and uproariously noisy.

The falcon not being able to strike his prey except by sweeping on him in a vertical direction, finds the body of the horse in his way; he expresses his anger by piercing cries, and manoeuvres around and above the protecting animal. Whatever may be the address of the horseman or the direc

tion taken by him, whether to the right or left, forward or backward, the unfortunate hare follows his steps and never leaves him.

When the chief has played long enough with the agonies of the hunted animal, a horseman jumps to the ground, takes it in his hand, and carries it in the middle of the circle showing it to the falcons, who follow with impatience the movements of this last act of the drama.

Having ascertained that the birds are directly above it, they are again shown the hare which is thrown as far as possible. Scarcely does it touch the ground, before a bird sweeps on it, striking it with its claws, and all hasten to give the finishing stroke to the poor animal.

The Arabs take the partridge in the same manner, except, that instead of forming a circle, they gallop in a single line, following the manœuvres of the falcons. This hunt does not offer the same attractions as that of the hare, and it is but rarely practised by the natives.

The most interesting hawking, for Arabs as well as Europeans, and the one which best shows the courage of the hawks, is the chase of the bustard. As I have mentioned above, the southern tribes alone have the opportunity of chasing this bird, which never approaches the colder regions of the highlands.

Those native chiefs that hunt the bustard, make a display of men and horses when they take the field, which adds greatly to the interest of the chase, and the beauty of the scene. The bustard is met with on both sides of the mountains which separate the Tell from the desert, but more

frequently on the other side, and is generally found in flocks of from ten to thirty. As they readily allow themselves to be approached by horsemen, the sportsmen deploy on the plain in an immense line preceded by the falconers marching in front and at long intervals.

It sometimes happens that the bustards take wing at a great distance when they are disturbed, but the falconers watch the place where they alight and continue walking forward until they see either a flock on the ground, or one that has taken wing near by. In either case, one or two of the best falcons are cast off.

As soon as the bustards that are on the ground perceive the falcon hovering above them, they squat like the hare, until the hawks have selected one of their number and commenced attacking him. After one or two swoops have been made, the poor bird is deserted by its mates, that fly away and leave it to be killed on the spot. As can readily be seen, such sport offers no great excitement, so the Arabs do all they can to prevent the bustard waiting for the falcon.

In the latter case, that is to say, when the hawks are cast off at a flock of bustards that are on the wing, they immediately single out a bird and commence pursuit. The fugitive, conscious of its fate, doubles and mingles in the flock in order to gain a chance of escape, then, when too closely pursued, he leaves them and mounts perpendicularly in the air struggling with all his might to keep above the falcons. Then in rapid succession, one after another, the other hawks are launched in air, and like so many feathered shafts, they

all rush after the fated bird, and the chase acquires an immense interest.

All the horsemen that are scattered over the great plain, spur their horses to their speed and gather around their chief with their eyes on the heavens, shouting to their favorite birds.

The struggle is generally very long and fierce. Feathers come floating down from above like snow, and faint cries are heard at intervals. At last, when the falcons have towered above the bustard, and broken a wing or torn out an eye, the great bird yields, and bustard and falcons together tumble to the earth in the midst of the circle formed by the horsemen, sometimes both being killed by the fall.

It sometimes happens that the bustard, instead of ascending vertically after separating from its companions, flies straight from the chase, drawing after it both falcons and horsemen. The falcons rush after it, and sometimes succeed in bringing it down by breaking a wing; but it often occurs that after several hours of this kind of coursing, the master gives the signal of retreat, leaving to the falconers the duty of following the chase in order not to lose all his birds.

I will here relate a fact I have heard, proving the strength and swiftness of the bustard and falcon.

In the winter of 1853, some Arabs of Ferjioua having taken a bustard and falcon which had fallen near them on the plain, carried both to their Sheik, who, on inquiring about it, found that this falcon belonged to a southern chief, who had been hunting in the plain of El-Outaia the same day that his falcon had caught and killed the bustard in

Ferjioua. Now it cannot be less than one hundred and fifty miles in a straight line between El-Outaia, where the bustard had been attacked at noon, to Ferjioua, where it had been brought to the ground at four o'clock, making a speed of thirty-seven miles an hour.

At the commencement of this chapter I spoke of a man named Mabrouk, who was one of the most zealous falconers I have ever met with.

This man, who only died within the last two years, hunted nothing but the bustard. When his birds conducted themselves with courage in the chase, he would not allow the other falconers to touch them. After having embraced and called them by their names, he placed them on his shoulder and head, then jumped on his horse and returned to his tent, carrying his dear family, as he called them, with him.

This passion went so far that, though possessing a good reputation as a father, he loved his falcons better than his wife and children, and his last caresses and sighs, just before his death, were bestowed on his hawks.

After the death of Mabrouk, his eldest son, following the last wishes of his father, gave their freedom to all the falcons that had the ingratitude to profit by the legacy.

Arab chiefs are met with who keep a perch of hawks without ever using them. For them it is a customary accessory to native luxury with which they cannot dispense, as it shows their fortune and grandeur, and makes an impression on the common people.

When travelling, the chief is preceded or followed by well-mounted and richly armed and equipped horsemen, carrying

falcons on their wrists. The whole of this cortége seems to breathe of nobility, and strikes the European as well as natives by its peaceful beauty and courtly pride.

The people when they meet an Arab chief travelling in this manner, dismount and kiss his knee, without even knowing to whom they are doing honor. It is the simple homage of the weak to the strong, of the poor to the rich, of the serf to the noble, they bow to chief as do the feathered tribes of the plain to the kingly bird that sits on his wrist.

## CHAPTER X.

## ADVICE TO THE AMATEUR LION HUNTER.

READER, if you are a hunter, it has probably often happened after a good dinner with a merry company, when each one has killed or massacred from quails to wild boars, after the manner of true carpet knights, that you have desired to meet face to face a nobler and more dangerous enemy than any to be found in your native forests ; and you have said, like many others, I would like to kill a lion: perhaps you have gone even further, and said, I could easily kill a lion.

Very well ! will you try in earnest to kill one of these interesting beasts ? If the desire is in your heart, and not on your lips, I can satisfy you by showing you my secret.

But first of all, see if the desire is not a mere whim ; examine yourself well, and if you are sure of yourself, then set about it.

You are young, vigorous, in health, with good limbs, and a true eye ; these physical conditions are indispensable ; in regard to the *moral*, you must have a love for the beautiful, and an iron will.

If you do not live in Paris, go there, seek Devisme, the gunsmith, ask for a double-barrel rifle ; tell him what you

want it for, and he will know that three conditions are essential : solidity, precision and penetration. Regulate the rifle with Devisme, and when you are able to drive the nail at thirty paces, be satisfied that it is good. Take in addition, a pistol possessing the same qualities ; pay especial attention to its penetration, which, like the rifle, is to be used with steel pointed conical balls.

The pistol I have not used in a long time, being neither exact or penetrating enough ; at Devisme's, you can get the best, such as it is.

You must have two suits of clothes ; one very warm, for winter ; the other, light for summer, but strong enough to resist the briers and thorns, with which the woods you are obliged to cross are full.

If I was certain you would come soon, I would say, set out from Philippeville, take the diligence for Constantine, where you will arrive in the evening ; go to the Arab office and inquire about me ; if I am out of town, which will be probable, you will await my return, and practise with your rifle during the interval. When I come back, we will make our arrangements to take the field together.

I think I hear you say to yourself : here is a cunning fellow, who is very impatient to have a companion in his hunting adventures. Ah ! gentleman and fellow-hunter, you are mistaken ; it is not a companion I seek, but a successor.

Alas ! I indeed give in my resignation ; my legs are no longer sufficient to support me, the rifle is too heavy for my arm, and I pant for breath after ascending the smallest ravine ; my eyes alone remain good. The machine has

perished in the field of honor ; would that you could say as much some day. But my end will be most happy, if Saint Hubert will allow me to die under the stroke of the proud foe I have so long battled.

While awaiting this fate, as I can no longer answer the calls of the Arabs, and am obliged to choose my time and season, in order to preserve the little health left me, I would be happy in finding a successor, and initiating him in the secret manœuvres, the nocturnal habits, and noble character of the animal that so few understand.

To seek, await, meet and conquer him, always and everywhere, in the night and day, is what I want to teach you, my brother, not so as to be able to say, this man is my pupil, but because lion-hunting boldly conducted by one man, has been introduced into Algeria by the conquest of the French, and there must not be a lack of good examples.

The Arabs are very brave, they look upon us from their simple grandeur, with insufferable disdain. I do not know if they are wrong or right, for bravery has so many different complexions, that each one defines it in his own way, sometimes according to his own spirit.

After God, the Arabs most fear the lion. To destroy him, they generally employ cunning ; drawing him, as we have shown, into a ditch where they assassinate him ; or secretly hidden within a pit solidly constructed in the ground, called a *melbeda* ; or when safely mounted on the top of a tree. They seldom attack him boldly face to face, and when they do, it is a battle where the victory is dearly bought, and seldom won. But there has never been an Arab who

has either alone or with a comrade dared to march against a lion, or 'await him *in the night*, without any protection but his own courage and arms.

The insolent pride of these men has been lowered by the deeds of a Frenchman; they have been humiliated by the willing courage of an enemy, who imposes the respect they have heretofore refused him and his countrymen.

I wish there was a handful of picked men in the province of Constantine, taken from the army or elsewhere, who would devote themselves to lion-hunting; these men, rewarded for their fatigues, and sure of a recompense in case of serious wounds, would render an immense service in this country, where we must speak by deeds and not by words.

I would be happy and proud to command this little troop, and direct it in the accomplishment of a mission which would be of profit alike to the new and old France. But I doubt if I shall ever have this honor, for it is more difficult than to find a successor; for, in the latter case, there is needed but one noble heart of devoted courage—surely our country can produce that.

Do not be long in coming; come while I am yet in this world, we will walk side by side as two brothers, and in the moment of danger I will be present; if the lion is too strong for us, I will fall the first, and my death will serve you as a lesson.

If you arrive too late, listen to the instructions of your teacher:

If you have provided yourself with the arms above-mentioned, and have learned how to use them, you can leave

France in the month of April, and will then have six months more of good weather. I entreat you, not to hunt in winter; it is these winters which have made me an old man at thirty. You will do well during three months every year, to lay in a fresh stock of health in the air and food of your native country.

Set out for Bone, in the beginning of April; on arriving, present yourself at the Arab office, explain your new profession, and ask the officer in command to give you authority to visit the tribes of the division, and introduce you to the chiefs.

If you do not, the tribes being responsible for all the murders committed on their lands, will fear that the lions will strangle, or the night-wanderers kill you, in which case, your death will rest on them, and they will do everything in their power to discourage your expedition.

Besides, the presence of a Christian among them being insupportable, they will take care not to call on you for aid; and you not being able to prove to them that you will be neither strangled by the lion nor assassinated by marauders, you have only one way of making any progress in your hunt.

You must introduce yourself to a *cadi* who has within the circle of his authority mountains frequented by lions; assiduously pay your court to him, and propitiate him by presents. If he consents to assist you, and he will consent if you are generous towards him, buy a mountain horse for yourself and a mule for your baggage.

If you intend to live well, buy provisions accordingly; if

you are abstemious, which is better, carry nothing but coffee and tobacco.

Refrain from wine and liquors, if you wish to have a clear eye, and besides, the water of the mountains is so pure and good, that you will soon cease to regret the wine you have left behind you. You will easily find a smart fellow at Bone, who will talk Arab for you and French with you, and take care of your baggage.

Before setting out, let the head of the Arab office know what *cadi* you are going with, and the country you intend to explore, and he will give you a passport which you will present to those Arab chiefs you do not know. In the subdivision of Bone, you have the choice between the departments of Bone, Calle, Edough and Guelma.

At Bone are the Beni-Salah where there are lions, but too many marauders; in Calle you will meet the same difficulty; if you commence there, you will be killed the first fortnight. The little hills to the south of Edough, near the house of the *cadi*, are good.

The country situated to the south and west of the camp of Dréan is equally good.

If they assure you that there is a lion in one of these countries, set out with a *cadi* or Sheik, tell him you intend pitching your tent as near as possible to the supposed lair, at a hundred steps above the douar. I said a hundred steps from the Arab tents, because your eyes are not to be making love to the women of the douar; and I said above, because every dark night, the marauders roam around the douars and they generally come from the lower side, where they are less

exposed to observation; and if you are in their way, in spite of the guard watching over you, you will lose your head that they may win a place in Paradise, or cause some embarrassment to the tribe that has received you.

And now that you are installed in the midst of the Arabs, you must learn how to behave yourself.

You will have scarcely pitched your tent, before you will have to receive a crowd of visitors. Do not be mistaken, they are only curious to see you in order to know if you are like other people, and they will place themselves around you, and stare at you like fools. Pay no attention to them. Some will say to you, "Welcome;" answer without smiling, by a sign of the head signifying, "It is well." Be mute, if you can, at least do not speak without absolute necessity.

A man who is called a prattler, is without honor among the Arabs. He is passable, even if he is as stupid as a beast, and honorable if either a robber or assassin, but he is disgraced if a prattler.

They will not fail to overwhelm you with questions on your plans as soon as they know what you have come for. Be on your guard. Answer the questions lightly and with quietness.

They will say: "Do you hunt the lion during the day or at night?" You can answer: "The day and 'night."

"Alone or accompanied?"

"Alone."

You will then say to them:

"I come from France to hunt the lion, because he does you a great deal of harm, and to kill him would be to do good

and besides, in lion hunting there is great danger, but Frenchmen love to face death if by doing so they can prevent evil."

Then a young man with a frank and innocent air, will say to you :

"If in the night, you meet one or several men in the forest, will you fire on them?"

Hasten to say as loud as possible, so that all can hear,

"What have these men who travel the woods in the night to do with me? their business is not mine, I am in search of lions. As soon as I see or hear them, I will say, pass by, and if they have no bad intentions, I will do them no harm."

The conversation ought to stop here, even if you remained a month in the douar. You may be sure that if the next day you fire some balls in a target to keep your hand in, that before one week has passed, for seventy leagues around, it will be known that a Frenchman has come to hunt the lion. Your height, age and figure, will be described; they will say, he seems brave, is a good shot and says nothing to marauders. These last words will have an immense influence, for it is a question of life and death to you.

But you have answered the leading question in the negative.

"Have you already killed any lions? Have you seen them? Have you heard them roar?" and until then your assured manner, and your skill in shooting, do not prove that you will yet kill your first lion.

The moment of action has arrived: send runners to the

neighboring douars, to know if the lion has been seen or heard, or if he has carried away any cattle.

While awaiting the arrival of the messengers, as you do not know the country and need a safe guide, and the only ones capable of crossing the woods in the night, on such an errand, are these professional robbers, you are obliged to employ one.

If you ask in the douar for a robber, they will laugh in your face, and answer that they are all honest people.

Ask for a man who is accustomed to walk in the night and is not afraid, you will find a hundred, all young and vigorous, from whom you can choose the one whose countenance best pleases your fancy.

If you talk to him of his courage, he will feel flattered; if you propose to him to accompany you, he will flatly refuse.

Then you will explain to him, that you only require him to show you the lair of the lion from a distance, and the paths he generally follows when he leaves the wood to descend into the plain; the spring or brook, at which he generally drinks, if there is a ford or defile frequented by him; and especially make him understand that you do not want him to remain near you at the moment of danger, but he can leave when he likes. He will then be quite willing to go with you, and you may rely on him.

It would not be a bad idea to promise him a reward, if you are satisfied with him.

An Arab, one of the runners you have sent, returns and tells you that the lion has carried off a cow and horse, at

some leagues distant from the douar where you have established yourself.

Collect your baggage and pitch your tent on the spot.

If your guide says he knows the country, and that he has friends there, take him with you, or rather leave him to bring you news, promising him a liberal reward if they are favorable, and you can get another guide in the douar to which you are going.

Ascertain if the lion roars, if he is alone or accompanied by his lioness, and if he is ever abroad during the day; make them describe him to you; but, for greater certainty, go yourself, during the day, with your guide, in the paths leading to the mountain, and try and trace his footsteps.

In case the ground should be dry, seek a marshy or a wet path, and when you will have found his tracks, you can judge him by the following signs: Place your open hand on the print, and if the claws of the animal are not covered by your fingers, it is a full-grown male. If your hand covers the foot, it is a lioness or a young lion.

If it is impossible to find a foot-print, look around carefully, and you can judge from the excrements, which are white and full of large bones.

If they are as large as your fist they belong to a full-grown male; if smaller, to a lioness or young lion.

When the excrements are twenty-four hours old, they become almost black.

Wait for the moon to rise, even if it is not until midnight; and do not set out in the dark.

Do not be impatient; you have plenty of time; and to

hunt the lion on a dark night is a folly of which I have been often guilty, and which has almost cost me my life on various occasions.

If you cannot find the foot-print, and the animal continues his depredations without roaring, set out in the night accompanied by your guide.

Examine the paths communicating with the douars visited by the lion.

Walk softly and halt frequently.

If you hear the hoarse cry which Europeans attribute to the hyena, while in reality it belongs to the jackal, follow the sound. This mournful cry will inform you that the jackal is following either a lion, marauder, or hyena.

As I mentioned before, he is in the train of these different parties in order to obtain a share in the prize, and all the while utters a peculiar cry to call his companions to the feast.

If the jackal follows a lion in the plain, it will not take long to be certain of the fact; for the latter on seeing you at any distance, no matter what, will approach.

In a woody country make the guide lead you to the path on which the animal you hear is probably coming, so as to cut off his escape; then set yourself by the side of a bush near the path and wait patiently.

Your guide ought to be some steps behind you, hidden among the trees, and in any case you should know where he is that he may be out of all danger.

Placed as you are, you cannot be seen by the advancing animal until he is opposite your rifle.

And now attention. Lionesses and young lions have claws and teeth, which can tear and kill perfectly well. Do not commence by a fault. The marauders have a thousand good reasons to give you no quarter; so be on the watch. If a man appears, let him see the end of your rifle and cry out, pass on! He knows you do not want him, and will probably obey. In any case, be on your guard, and do not let yourself be killed like a worm. If it is a lion, await with your rifle to your shoulder, and the finger on the trigger, until he is opposite you on the path; he will stop on seeing you.

Just behind the shoulder is a good point to aim at, but it is by no means a dead shot. A lion that I had shot through and through in the shoulder with two balls, cut down two Arabs and carried off my spahi Rostain.

Aim between the eye and ear if the animal's side is towards you; between the eyes if he fronts you. Then fire! he will fall. Wait for a moment on the defensive, and do not approach him until he no longer gives a sign of life.

If it is a hyena that the jackal has signalled to you by his cry, let him go. The Arabs say: Cowardly as an hyena, and they are right. This is the way you must manage in case you are fortunate enough to meet the enemy.

It is probable that for a whole moon you will have to wander over the mountain and plain without seeing the lion. Do not be discouraged; remember the Arabian proverb: *There are a hundred douars, a hundred roads, and a hundred fords for one lion.*

The proverb is wrong; for there are more than a thousand douars, a thousand roads, and a thousand fords for one lion

The proof is, that I have passed six hundred nights in the open air, searching the most frequented ravines, watching all the best fords, and I never met but twenty-five lions.

A lioness and young lion never remain long in one country, and the Arabs will attribute their disappearance to your presence. You may kill some wild boars, if you have a mind, your eye and hand will lose nothing by it, and then return to Guelma.

Present yourself to the governor of the district, and to the head of the Arab affairs, wait for the next new moon, and then set out for Mahouna.

On the western side of this beautiful mountain you will find the country of the Ouled Hamza. Pitch your tent among them, and ask the Sheik for a guide. During the day examine the two paths on the side of this mountain, and descend to the border of the Ouled-Cherf, and obtain a knowledge of the fords of Boulerbegh and Hirondelles. You will find several blinds, or hiding-places, made by the Turks who hunted for Ahmed-Bey.

These are fortified shelters that I had repaired by the Arabs for a shelter in case of storm.

Remember that these hiding-places are made by cowards for cowards, and if you use them the Arabs will not fail to say that they also can kill lions like you.

The Mahouna is the pleasure garden of the lions ; not one of these noble travellers leaves the kingdom of Tunis for that of Morocco without stopping some time on his journey at Mahouna.

If, on arriving, you do not meet a large old lion, who, by

his roaring, frightens the animals all around, you will find at the fords I have mentioned, traces of some family that has taken up its summer quarters in the dens bordering the Ouled-Cherf. After you have found the footprints of several lions on the sand of the river, try to find the path by which they descend from the woods to their forays on the plain, and you will have an entire moon in which to wait for them, and most probably you will not fail to encounter them.

Place yourself in such a position that you can overlook the ford, and fire from above, always remembering never to fire from *below*; however dangerously your first ball may wound the animal, it only takes two seconds for him to be on you.

Remember that the more seriously a lion is wounded, and the nearer he is to death, the more dangerous he becomes.

At this ford of Boulerbegh to which I recommend you, on one night in July, 1845, I found myself face to face with three lions, each about three years old. The first stopped on seeing me; I sent him rolling into the river. It was well I had placed myself above the path, or this animal, with his broken shoulders, would infallibly have killed me, since three times he turned towards me, dragging himself on his stomach, which effort must have caused him excruciating agonies. My position and the slowness of his movements enabled me to reload, and three times I sent him into the brook, where he at last remained.

Do not be worried if you see a number of tracks in the path below you, for if they are young lions but two years old, they will walk before their mother

You can let them pass, and attack her. In case the cubs are of younger age than this, be prudent, for the mother will not wait for you to attack either her or her young, but as soon as she perceives you, she will take the offensive, and it is not an easy thing to escape from such a duel. As for example :

During November, 1846, a lion had killed and dragged off a horse to the bottom of a ravine where I discovered it. I judged from the footprint that it must be a lioness, and awaited her return seated at the foot of a mastie.

The first night nothing came; the second nothing; at an early hour on the third, the old lady arrived, preceded by her little ones, pretty well grown.

One of them was already snuffing the dead horse that lay on his back, in the bottom of the ravine, and was just commencing his repast, when his mother, who had lain down to watch, after looking all around, perceived me. Our eyes had scarcely met, when, with one bound, she jumped on her little one, as if about to devour him. The frightened cub took flight in the twinkling of an eye, and nothing was left in the ravine but myself and the horse.

A novice would have said : why did he not fire sooner ? and would look upon the game as lost. I knew it was no child's play that I had in hand, and was determined the lioness should not be the winner if I could help it; so my eyes and ears were all attention. Suddenly I heard on my left, and almost behind me, like the noise of a mouse, something brushing against a bush, and turning to that side I perceived first two large paws, then the long feelers, and then the enormous nose of the lioness, crouched down in the attitude of springing.

My gun was at my shoulder, my finger on the trigger, and the moment I caught her eye, glassy and fixed, from among the leaves, an iron messenger of death crashed through her brain; she sprang into the air with a great bound, and fell on the body of the horse with a convulsive motion; and died. I waited all that night for the cubs, but they never returned, having probably witnessed the tragical demise of their honored parent, and feared lest they might share her fate.

The lioness does not boldly attack you, but on seeing you, first stops, then if you aim at her, will crouch, and so closely that you can scarcely see her.

In a moment, after she will cautiously raise her head. If your gun is not at your shoulder, she will pretend to go away, but she will never leave the neighborhood if her cubs have not escaped beyond all danger.

If they are wandering near you or have stopped in their flight, the lioness, that you believed to be far off, will crawl around you on her belly, and spring on you suddenly without the slightest noise or warning. Therefore, be prudent, cool, and vigilant.

If you pass the summer in Mahouna, it may sometimes happen on a fine evening, a little after sunset while you are sipping a cup of coffee, while seated before your tent, that you will hear something like the distant noise of artillery, echoing among the mountains. There is no fort in the neighborhood, and the cannon at Guelma are not fired except at noon. Go and seat yourself outside the douar, in order to hear more distinctly.

Your ear has never listened to a more harmonious, sonorous and imposing sound.

Attention, and do not lose a note.

It is a large old lion who arrived last night, and whose yawns are shaking the mountains.

Wait a little, for he is leaving his den, and walking with half shut eyes, for he is not quite awake yet, but presently he will shake off his laziness and you will then hear him roar.

All the Arabs who have heard him, will come to seek you, for they well know the consequences of a visit from their master.

If you listen to their entreaties, you will set out instantly and kill the lion before he has crossed half of his dominions.

Young and old, all come squatting around you, and listen with religious awe to this voice which imposes silence on all others, the voice of the strongest and boldest creature on the earth.

It is both curious and instructive to observe the Arabs.

As soon as the lion is silent, they all commence talking at once; they hurl a thousand curses against him; they overwhelm him with the most insulting epithets; they even go so far as to menace him, if he dares to approach their tent.

The lion roars again, and the words remain hushed on their lips. Not a sound is to be lost.

Great instruction is to be gained for you and others, from this respectful silence of the Arabs.

I have already said that the Arab was brave; and how could he help being so, born, living and dying in the midst of dangers which the inhabitants of Europe can never know or appreciate?

In his infancy, instead of moral counsels, he hears of nothing but murder, wars and forays.

The wisest, most virtuous, and most respected among his people, is he who has killed the greatest number of his foes.

Family revenge, the hatred of one tribe against another, and detestation of Christians, are the lessons of his childhood ; and to complete his education, when he is fifteen, some evening after the old men have told their tales of hate and revenge around the tent fires, when the neighbors have retired, and the child nestles in his accustomed place to sleep, his father pushes him with his foot, and calls him a lazy coward.

The boy not understanding, begs for an explanation.

His father laughing, points him to a pistol and dagger hanging in his tent.

The child bounds to his parent and kisses him respectfully on the shoulder, who proud and happy at having a son that promises so well, tells him to sit down near him, and speaks to him as follows :

“Have you gone out in the night, without my knowledge?”

The child relates his love for a young girl of a neighboring douar, whom he has sometimes visited, at the risk of having his brains blown out with a pistol.

“That is well,” says the father, “but not sufficient. You are already tall, and blush to hear your neighbors call you a boy. You must let them see that you are a man.”

“I ask nothing better,” answers the child ; “but, the night seems very dark, and I would be afraid to go alone.”

“For the first time, you will not go alone ; take these arms,

leave your burnous, which is too white, and bind your shirt around your waist."

Whilst our pupil is making his toilet, the old man goes to the tent of a friend and says to him:

"My son is ready."

The mother cries at first for fear of failure or misfortune, but she is told that the young people will be conducted by a courageous and prudent friend.

All is arranged, and about ten o'clock, in a heavy rain and dark night, three men covered with shirts the color of the ground, reaching to the knee and bound by a leathern belt, silently leave the douar.

Under a burnous pieced in a thousand places, and which has served three generations without having been washed, each of the adventurers hides a pistol and dagger. The head is covered with a brown hood and the feet are bare.

They cross the fields in silence and only stop at the sight of the enemy's fires. It is a douar of ten or twelve tents placed close together in a circle; in the middle are the flocks and herds. Outside and before each tent are a number of dogs keeping good watch.

In this douar is a man whose father or grandfather has killed a near relative, or mayhap a distant ancestor of one of our adventurers, and it is the life of this man they seek. The fires are extinguished, one by one, and everybody in the douar seems to be asleep, except the dogs. The old man guiding the boys, knowing that at a certain hour of the night some of the dogs, overcome with fatigue, yield to the influence of slumber, patiently awaits the moment of action.

In the meanwhile, a lion who has not dined, and who, seeing the advanced hour of the night, feels very hungry, arrives at the same douar, and perceives three men crouching on the ground. "Good," says he, "here are some comrades who arrive just in time; and he lays himself down, and waits. You must know that the lion is naturally very lazy. Now as the men who wander about in the night are oftener robbers of cattle than assassins, the lioness says to her young lion, when he is old enough to travel over the country:

"My child, when you meet men in the night, follow them, and do them no harm if they do not molest you.

"The flesh of men is not as good as that of cows, being generally as dry as a herring.

"Travel in company with them then, and when they arrive near a douar, lay down and wait while they work for you.

"Let them drive the cattle they have stolen for some distance; and when you have found a brook or a spring on your path, present yourself, and demand your portion."

The lion that has followed the counsels of his mother, finds himself well off. Instead of carrying or dragging his dinner for a quarter of an hour, and afterwards having to go in search of a brook to quench his thirst, he finds his wants all provided for by his friends, and that on the very spot he may select.

Our lion is now lying down waiting; but the dogs who have seen the fire of his eyes or winded him, make a frightful din.

The douar is aroused, and all are on foot. Some yell, and others fire their guns in the air.

The women relight the fires and throw burning sticks over the hedge to frighten the enemy.

While this is going on, the day approaches without the comrades of the lion being able to do anything. The hunger of the latter continues, and he becomes impatient, "*Ah! ah!*" says he, "*I will take a sheep myself, if it is not too heavy.*" And he arises.

The douar is placed on a declivity, which he rapidly ascends.

The dogs, who are all following him with their eyes and nose, turn towards that side. \*

He rushes forward, and in less time than it has taken me to tell, has jumped over the hedge, six feet high, which surrounds the douar, has seized a sheep, and leaping the barrier a second time has disappeared.

The dogs are in the tents, mute and stupefied; and the men are like the dogs.

The storm having passed, inquiries are made in regard to the sheep. The eyes of a European would see neither tents nor flocks, the night being so dark.

An Arab, however, immediately calls out, "It is the lame black sheep."

All again retire to rest, and, excepting some old ones, the pack of dogs follow the example of the masters.

Our three men then carefully examine the priming of their pistols, and crawling on their hands and knees, invisibly and silently advance to the camp.

The tent of the man they search is pointed out; the leader only says to the boys :

“Children, be men.”

They reach the hedge that surrounds the douar, and find the entrance is closed by prickly bushes to keep in the herds.

The old man whispers in the ear of his companions :

“Do not move, until you hear the dogs bark on the other side ; then be as quick as you can.”

He wheels round, and dragging himself on his stomach to the other side of the douar, stations himself opposite the tent that the boys are to enter.

He raises himself slowly ; if the dogs do not see him, he approaches a few steps and coughs , that is enough. In one instant, all the dogs in the douar are around him.

In order to keep them at a distance, he has only to walk towards them on his hands and knees , the dogs will be too afraid to approach him.

But the entrance of the douar has already been noiselessly passed by our young people.

The tent they are seeking is close to them.

They raise their heads and listen ; nothing is heard within. Everybody is asleep. The women's place is the lowest down, and that of the children next, while the master himself is lying in front of the door, with a pistol under his head, and his yataghan by his side.

The child we spoke of has entirely disappeared under the tent ; the darkness will not permit him to see his enemy, but he hears him breathing, he drags himself near him, until he

## ADVICE TO THE AMATEUR LION HUNTER.

feels his breath ; his head is well placed. A shot is heard, and all is over.

One hour after, our three assassins are snoring under their fathers' tents, perfect pictures of boyish innocence.

The next day, the child is proclaimed a man, and is entitled to a voice in the councils of the nation.

His comrades speak to him with deference, and some pretty girl will recompense his noble action with the warm embraces of a desert maid.

The man who has received such an education, is necessarily courageous, especially during the night.

Among all those surrounding you, there are twenty who will present their heads to the yataghan without the least emotion ; but you will not find one bold enough openly to attack their leonine foe who does them so much harm.

From whence comes this respect of the Arab for the lion ? It proceeds from the numberless examples the latter has given of his strength and courage.

In the numerous struggles and combats, the lion has always been the stronger, and when he has yielded to numbers, the victory has been dearly bought.

Behold European, and especially Frenchman, who are held in such poor esteem by the Arabs, what a noble mission is yours.

If you do good in giving to the poor, they will say that you do not know what to do with your money, and will hate you ; if you do good in rendering justice, they will say that you do that in order to draw them to you, and convert them to your belief, customs and religion, and they will mistrust you.

## THE LION KILLER.

If you are strong and courageous, they will hold you in respect and veneration. You may claim it from them on every occasion and in every place, and they will not dare to look you in the face. It is not for yourself alone that you sport with death, it is for civilized Europe and for France.

Let us return to Mahouna. Do not hasten to follow the lion whose voice is calling to you from the hills; he has just arrived, and will remain in the country for a month, at least.

With good dens, flocks on every side, and water in abundance, how could he be more comfortably situated?

If there is a full moon, approach half a league nearer, in order the better to hear his roars, and accustom yourself to them. The nearer you approach, the more you will be agitated by this voice, which has no equal in forest cries.

If the animal seems to be coming towards you, leave the path and enter the woods for a few steps.

You will thus be able to hear it very near as he passes, and I warn you that your heart will beat with the pulsations of the air that trembles at his tones.

Remain where you are until daylight, and recommence the next night.

It is probable that they will tell you that the lion has killed some cows, horses or mules; a large old lion does not gather with a sparing hand; seat yourself about ten steps from the body of the animal last killed.

Station yourself in such a way as to be above the lion when he arrives, and you can take aim at your ease. He eats slowly, and will do you the honor of looking at

you from time to time, as if to ask what you are doing there.

Fire between the eyes and kill at the first shot.

If you have passed two nights without seeing the lion, you may be sure he will not return, but is killing and eating elsewhere.

Meanwhile the moon is at its full, it rises at sunset and sinks beneath the horizon at daybreak.

You have sufficiently studied the manners of the animal to know that in leaving his den, he will follow some particular path, where you can be sure to meet him.

Set out at sunset, seat yourself on a rock overlooking the den, and wait.

Pay attention to the first roar, in order to find out the direction the lion is taking. If he is coming towards you, you will only have a few steps to take, if he is going in the opposite direction and you cannot cross the woods, await his return, after he has procured his dinner, and is coming home again.

This side of the mountain being everywhere thickly covered and intersected with deep ravines, and the lion having only two roads to take to the douars, it will be the more easy for you to meet him.

When you hear the roarings approach, and if you judge that the animal is on the same path as yourself, walk slowly towards him until you find an open space, in which you can see your foe, and when you have found it, seat yourself and wait.

Whether the lion, on leaving his den, walks with a rapid

gait, which carries him over a long distance without fatigue, or whether, having satisfied his hunger, he slowly strolls homeward, swaying his enormous head from side to side, as soon as he perceives you on his path he will not fail to stop.

If you remain seated he will softly approach, stopping from time to time in order to paw the ground like a bull.

Sometimes he will roar loud enough to make you deaf, sometimes he will breathe diabolical sighs. Do not lose sight of him for an instant; keep your eyes fixed on his.

If he leaves the path in order to sharpen his claws on a tree, be ready. Prudence and coolness are now especially needed, and the least haste will be fatal.

He sees your arms, and none of your movements escape him, though he will not attack you until the first shot has been fired. When you aim, he will crouch like a cat. In this position he will show nothing but the top of his head, and, on my word, however near you may be, I would advise you not to fire.

With your gun to your shoulder and your eyes on those of the lion, walk a few steps from the path, either to the right or left, according to the side the moon throws the best light over your enemy.

If you turn too much he will think you are going to fire on his body, and will wheel round on his stomach, always keeping his face towards you.

Take but two or three steps, and as soon as the side of his head seems to be opposite you, aim well between the ear and eye, and pull the trigger. Of two things, either one or the

other happens: either the lion is instantly killed, or before being able to judge of the effect of your shot, you are stretched on your back under the wounded animal, whose head and fore paws are on you, crushing you in the earth. But you are not dead for all that.

If your ball has been well directed and not met any obstacle to turn it aside, you will escape with a dozen or more scratches from his claws, which you can cure providing his teeth have not touched you, and if his agony does not last longer than a few seconds, you may still get out of the scrape with your head on your shoulders.

In any case, remember that you have a dagger, and if you have not lost it in your fall, strike quickly, firmly, and in the right place.

If the lion is killed on the spot, thank your God, and recommence the battle with the next one you meet.

One word of advice. Whenever you find yourself opposite a full grown lion, do not be too long in carrying out your manoeuvres. If too much haste may cost you your life, too great slowness in the attack may be equally fatal. The lion, becoming impatient, has only to bound on you while you are aiming, and you will be disarmed and torn to pieces without having fired a single shot.

And now that you have delivered the mountaineers from their enemy, and can judge of the effect which your success has produced on these unimpassioned men that surround you, go to other countries to seek new victories.

You may be sure that you will be preceded by the noise of this exploit, and henceforth will be baptized, *The lion killer*

The Jebel-Archioua and the neighborhood of Medjez-Amar, both in the district of Guelma, are the favorite dens of wandering lions.

Follow the footsteps of one of these old fellows, seeking an Eden wherein to end his days in peace.

Track him from night till morning, across the mountains and plains.

When you have heard his last roar at day-break, you can be sure that there he will pass the day.

Send for your horse, which has been left far behind ; pass the day in repose, and in the evening draw near his lair. At the first roar, try to come up with the animal ; if he has already set out, try to head him off. Never mind the country, the marches, fatigues and privations, so that you will in the end, find yourself opposite your adversary ; a few minutes talk with him, and all the past is forgotten.

Whatever may happen, never kill a marauding Arab ; and if you are forced to do it in self-defence, never again set your foot in the country where it has happened.

Walk softly, and closely examine the country behind and around you, stopping often to listen for some sound that can aid you.

Whenever you pass a ford or ravine, or are following a thickly wooded path, be ready to fire at any moment, for a lion may hear or see you, and throw himself on the borders of the path, to spring on you unawares, or the marauders may do the same.

After having killed half a dozen lions, in the night, you can, without compromising your reputation or losing the esteem

of the Arabs, lay in wait for one, with a live bait, in the evening.

If you should follow by daylight, the track of a lion you have wounded the previous night, take care to stop the moment you lose sight of his tracks or the marks of his blood. Follow the trail slowly, step by step, and whenever you see ahead of you a thicket capable of hiding the animal, throw stones in it to rouse him, so that you may have the chance of a shot before he can bound on you.

Always keep on the highest ground.

If the dew or rain be heavy, keep the lock of your gun well covered. Discharge it always when coming in at night, and load it at the moment of going out, after having wiped it dry. If at any time you suspect it may hang fire, by all means avoid an encounter.

Use powder and caps of the very best quality, and remember the lion rarely falls under one ball.

Never seek safety in flight when the animal charges, but stand the shock like a man, and with these good counsels, the best I can give, may all good spirits aid you and bless you, until at last when all but your fair fame shall sleep beneath the greenwood, may the Arab symbols, silently eloquent, say, at your tombstone, **HERE LIES A MAN.**

## CHAPTER XI.

## MY VOCATION.

HAD you, my reader, been born of parents moderately rich, and in a position of honor and comfort, and found yourself on the morrow poorer than the beggar to whom you had given alms in the evening; had you been sheltered by the love of father and mother, a love that knew no metes nor bounds, and at one stroke of fate had found yourself an orphan, you then would understand the position of the writer when he commenced his career—a career beginning in feebleness and timidity, that was to end in success, and to replace to his relatives not only the lost fortune, but the protection of a father who was the honor and support of the family.

I confess with a feeling of honest pride, that this was the spring of my life; this is what has given me my profession of arms and the name of *The Lion Hunter*. This was the origin of my tastes, and from these causes I burned to measure my strength with the strength of the most powerful of beasts, and my courage with the king of the desert. I, poor elf that I am, declared war against the greatest living thing, a war that was fair and open, that gave an eye for an eye, and left to the victor the life of the vanquished, with none in the

forest to bear witness to the deed, save the great God who is over us all.

One more avowal to the reader before I finish my reflections. It is that I have often remarked a great analogy between my family in its ruin, and that of the Arab devastated by the lion, and left without cattle or chief.

It is not easy to understand my feelings when I was summoned, as I often have been, to the aid of a family that had been attacked by the lion, when I found the women under the tents weeping and praying, the children, too young to understand what they had lost, and the old men regretting the strength of their youth that had gone, before the ardor of battle had died in their veins.

I have heard a youth calling to the women to keep silence—a youth whose tender cheeks were yet soft with his mother's kisses; who, flushed with grief for the loss of a father who had been carried off by a lion on the previous evening, would exclaim, "Keep your tears and mourning for the morrow; to-day, it is blood that we want to revenge my father. Where are his arms, give them to me that I may go?"

But let us not anticipate. This hunting history was written day by day, and act by act, and each episode will be found in its regular order. We will commence with my profession, and a few words in relation to my first entry in Africa.

Whenever I meet in the streets one of those companies of mimic soldiery, where childhood's curls are covered with paper hats, and boyish figures straighten themselves under the martial tinkle of wooden sword and gun, and tin-pail drum, I pause involuntarily to watch the manœuvres, and

however small may be the ranks it is rare, not to find in them a true soldier in embryo. It is not always the one in command; sometimes he stands in the ranks and wears the quiet air of a girl in disguise. But on a careful examination there is one thing remarkable, either in the manner of carrying the arms, or in the bearing; not the swaggering air of some—those are the peacocks that spread their tails to show the richness of their feathers—but the serious mien that seems to say, “I am in my place and was made for it.”

When such a physiognomy or bearing meets my view, I always feel that here is a fellow who was born with a sword in his hand; but who are his parents, and what will they make of him? Perhaps a notary, or a priest, or a student, when the chick, hardly out of its shell, is armed like a fighting cock. On these occasions I always want to see the father, and say to him:

“When I was a boy like yours I played soldier like him, my parents wanted me to walk another path. I followed it like a dutiful son, but it brought me out a soldier at the end.”

In fact, when a taste for a profession is strongly marked, there is no alternative, the boy becomes eminent in that career or in none.

When I was ten years of age I waged war against the sparrows that came for the fruit in my father's gardens, with an antiquated blunderbuss as my only weapon, and then upon the cats that came for the sparrows, and I banded my young comrades to assist in this warfare, which became more dreaded by the neighbors than the previous depredations of the birds.

At sixteen I would have made a good master of fencing and the pugilistic art.

I remember one day at a village fête I saw a woman maltreated by a brutal man, while the villagers stood by without offering to interpose. I threw myself between the oppressor and his victim, calling out to him, "You coward, leave that woman and begone."

We fought and I conquered. The man fled under the jeerings of the crowd, and the woman thanked me as her preserver.

Such successes, however, were not satisfying to a mind that was stretching far beyond its native hamlet. A class of men were then common in the provinces, who bore the high sounding titles of *lions*, a name more properly accorded to them for their roaring than their bravery. They wore a menacing mien, and were imposing for their brutality and assumption. I declared myself their avowed enemy, and many were the battles we fought, but in a little time the victory was so easily won, that I turned to my old anticipations, and with a proud look on the great future, that smiles so hopefully to a boy, I volunteered in the spahis, and debarked at Bone on the 19th of June, 1842.

Like most young men who joined the African army, I supposed that an opportunity for distinction would not be long in coming, and I thought correctly.

I had hardly put on my uniform when an officer came to me saying, "You have just arrived from France, I'll take you as my orderly."

I asked him what my duties would be in that situation.

He replied, "You will groom my two horses and your own, you will keep my arms polished, and clean my boots."

I had a great mind to tell the gentleman that he would be doing me a great pleasure by rendering the same services to me, but reflection controlled my tongue, and made me remember that an arrest would be a bad commencement of a campaign, so I only replied,

"Sir, your horses will be badly groomed, your arms poorly polished, and your boots awkwardly blacked."

The officer surveyed me from head to toe, I saluted him politely, and we mutually turned our backs on each other.

About an hour afterwards, I was ordered into the presence of the treasurer.

"Do you know how to write?" he said.

"Yes, captain." I answered.

"Very well, I am glad to hear it; the time of the inspection is coming round, I have a great deal to do, and you can do duty in my office."

I was then seated, without further words, at a table with implements of writing before me, and a large mass of papers, and one of the secretaries gave me a paper to copy. When I had completed the work, which was a short one, I handed it to the secretary, who gave it a long examination and then passed it to the treasurer, who cried out on seeing it,

"Sir, what language do you write in?"

"Captain, I have copied."

"How copied—it is illegible, and one cannot recognize a word among all these fly tracks."

I answered, that I never had made so good a copy before, and then they ordered me back to my barracks.

Now I thought I was on a fair road to become a soldier. I received my arms, accoutrements and a horse, and being fully equipped I had nothing more to wait for but the order to march.

Among my new comrades there was one for whom I immediately conceived an attachment; an old soldier of the brigade named Rousselet, an accomplished specimen of the old trooper. I applied to him to know what I must do to get immediate active service, and he told me.

“We will never see any work here; I propose that we apply for an exchange into the squadron that they are fitting up at Guelma.”

We made the application without further discussion, and after having our names enregistered for three months, we received the order to depart. With a joyful heart I rode out of the city of Bone, and bade adieu to its harbor and gardens, and the hazy peaks of its blue hills, and on the third day after, from an eminence I caught sight of the checkered encampment of Guelma, then a mere garrison, but which since that time has grown into a beautiful little city.

It is not generally understood that the regiment of spahis is composed principally of native warriors, under the command of French officers and subalterns. It was for this reason that I had the honor of serving as an orderly for the three months that I stayed at Bone. During this time I was living entirely with the French troops, and had no connection whatever with our Arab comrades, and on arriving at Guelma

I could not help remarking the very cold welcome that was extended to us by them. I could not understand a word of their language, but their looks and gestures gave me no room to doubt the little love they bore us.

I asked Rousselet the reason of this dislike so manifest to all around us. He answered,

"They don't love wine, nor those that drink it; we will never be able to civilize those fellows."

This was all that Rousselet knew of a people among whom he had passed ten years of his life. I immediately comprehended that I had a poor instructor, if I wanted to understand the language, habits, and customs of Algeria, and I resolved, thereafter to do without a teacher. There are things in this world that can be taught by no master.

When we arrived, the camp of Guelma was all in expectation of war, there was no conversation except that which turned on forays and battle. I dreamed already of conflict, of standards taken, of the enemy overthrown; I snuffed the battle afar off. As to Rousselet, more practical, he dreamed only of razzias and booty.

This brave child of arms, brave as he might be and full of courage, frankness and honor, desired the war as much as myself, but only that he might win booty, and then go back to garrison and drink it up. His education did not fit him for any higher grade than that of corporal, which he had won by his bravery in the battle-field, and resigned in order to be more free to roam as he listed through the French provinces of northern Africa.

For him a campaign was an excursion, a hostile encounter,

a pleasant adventure which brought in its train, beeves, sheep and tapirs, commodities easily turned into money, and that, easier still could be turned into drink, to furnish a gay debauch in which,

“Many a wassail bout  
Wore the long night out.”

In an Arab killed or taken captive (he had but a small fancy for taking prisoners), my noble friends saw, not only the horse and gun, but the burnous and the saddle. If by chance it was a chief, then the affair was glorious, and the libations of the conqueror so much the more copious and frequent, were prolonged indefinitely to the great joy of all his merry drinking comrades.

One evening Rousselet was spinning out one from his budget of anecdotes that I had known by heart for a long time, but to which his habitual auditors, Messires Ott, Block and others, listened each time with renewed pleasure, by reason of the accompaniments, always full of interest for their Dutch guzzles, that were the drier the more they drank.

He, rolling out the story with his full ringing voice, told how the chief of a company of flying Arabs was soon overhauled by his brave war horse. In less time than it would have taken to empty a bottle, he (Rousselet) was by his side, and drove a bullet through his brain. In a moment he had dismounted to take possession of the prize, a horse worth five hundred francs, a gun worth one hundred francs, and a saddle and burnous which were worth as much more.

“But didn’t you zee,” interrupted Block, “whats money’s nes has in his pocket?”

"How much drinks would all that pays?" questioned Ott.

"To horse! to horse! my lads," shouted the captain of the barracks, as he came rushing out of breath into the room, "we march on a razzia in a quarter of an hour."

"Hurrah!" yelled Rousselet, knocking over the table and Dutchmen together, as he jumped to his feet. "Gribouri (the name of his horse), has made razzias such as were never seen in this country. If there is a red bournous in the wind to-morrow it is Gribouri that will have it, and if there is anything to drink after the hunt is done, all of us lads will be there!"

After a night's march under a heavy rain, we reached the neighborhood of the rebel tribe, and found that it had taken up its penates, "and silently fled away."

The wild warrior whom I was to annihilate, and the red bournous of, Rousselet's dream had both followed the hegira, and in lieu of the stubborn foes we came to fight, there only remained to meet us an army of famished dogs, wandering about the site of the old encampment.

## CHAPTER XII.

## A SKETCH OF AFRICAN WARFARE.

WARFARE in Africa is so curious by reason of the customs and manners of the adversaries that the French have to combat that I have thought it well to give a rapid sketch of it, for the sake of those persons who have any interest in foreign wars.

The Arab population is divided into three different classes, as follows: the Kabyles, residing in permanent settlements near the sea coast; the Chaouia, the ancient Numidians, that form more than half of the population of the province of Constantine, whose tents and troops occupy all the country comprised between Kabylie and the desert; and lastly, the Arabs proper, who are the lords of the desert oases, roaming about in caravans, or pitching their tents for a night, and passing the summer on the high plateaux, and the winter in the desert of Sahara, or on its borders.

As each of these people carry on a campaign after their own fashion, I will explain their different manners of warfare successively:

The Kabyles live in the mountains with precipitous wooded sides. They have no cavalry, but to make up for this defi-

ciency, they are the most indefatigable of foot soldiers, hardy well armed, and excellent shots.

As an example of their skill as marksmen, it is the custom among a great many of their tribes for a father to refuse the hand of his daughter in marriage, unless the claimant for the honor can hit an egg placed at a spot as far distant as the old man can throw a stone.

The whole military tactics of the Kabyles consist in the occupation of some commanding eminence on the line of march of hostile troops, whose progress they have marked by their spies, with as many of their own marksmen as they are able.

When a Kabyle force is discovered, the general in command sees or judges as near as he can of the number of natives before him. If there are not very many, he orders up one or two companies that carry the rock with the bayonet, without answering the fire of the natives, and hold it until the whole column has passed by under their protection, or until they are relieved by other companies, that hold it in turn and surrender it to the next.

But on the contrary, if the Kabyles are posted in force, the army halts just within cannon shot, and in a few minutes some of the most audacious of the natives are seen descending from the heights, and gambolling, and gesticulating to within gun-shot of the troops, as though to ridicule the soldiers. After having danced and hurrahed to their own great satisfaction, and the amusement of the soldiers, they fire their guns and then retreat to their comrades, who have remained squatted on the pinnacle of the hill.

After a few moments of repose the battalions of attack are selected, and begin slowly to ascend the mountain, taking advantage of every irregularity of the ground, or intervening obstacle, to cover their approach, while at the same time, over the heads of the advancing troops, the artillery fire bomb-shells in order to disorder the masses of the enemy that are awaiting on the summit. When the advancing battalions get within fire, or six hundred yards, they take a short rest to recover breath, then the clarions sound the charge, the artillery pauses, and the officers and men charge up the hill at full run, without answering a shot of the enemy, and chase them from their position.

The Kabyles being once dislodged from their heights do not flee, but move down the hill on the other side, hiding themselves in the ravines or wooded hill-side, and wait until the eminence they have lost shall be abandoned, when they will again repossess it.

Sometimes it happens that the ridge occupied by the Kabyles is selected by the general as a suitable place for the encampment, and while the men bring up the equipages, and raise the tents, the natives turn their attention to the sentinels and outposts that surround the camp. Not being able to do anything against the encampment itself, they wait until darkness has covered the hills, and then steal silently up to one of the places that they saw occupied by the troops, and assault it with such intrepidity and force, that it has become the habit with the soldiers in the outposts to intrench themselves to avoid being cut to pieces in the dark.

Another equally ingenious method has been adopted on the other side.

The advance post that is in the most exposed position remains quiet until darkness hides the camp, and then the fires are lit, and the men hide in ambuscade, either to the right or to the left, and wait until the natives creep up to surprise the post, when they pour in their fire on the Arab horde. By this means the pleasant little surprise is made mutual.

I have said that the Kabyles, when they are on an eminence, flee without waiting for the attack of our troops. It is the same with the passage of a defile, the fording of a river, or the attack on a village. It is enough if the attack is quick and vigorous, and that the soldiers do not pause to fire, but march right on to the goal either in a direct line or by converging movements. The result is always certain, the Kabyles abandon their position without waiting for the bayonet.

As they always fight until the attacking column is close at hand, and as their aim is very true, it is only with great losses to our troops, that we can drive them from a strong position.

The tactics of these mountaineers consist in shooting from a cover upon men who are uncovered, and when hard pressed to retreat beyond the reach of balls, until those who have attacked them retreat in their turn. Then commences the difficult manœuvre of a retreat. When they hear the trumpets sounding this movement they come from behind rocks, and trees, and from the depths of ravines, where they lay hidden like wild beasts, and climb to the point about

being evacuated. They often are in possession of the eminence before the troops have gone fifty yards down the slope at full run.

It can be easily seen what an advantage they have while firing on men completely exposed in the rear to their shots, and in front to constant ambuscades of smaller parties in copse wood, or on rocks, from which they retire only to take possession of others further on.

The troops, when retiring, send back a company of men, who conceal themselves in some suitable place, and allow the next company to pass them in retreating, and hold the enemy at bay until they have discharged their weapons, then they run at full speed, passing the other company, which has in its turn ambuscaded, to repeat the same operation, until all are beyond the reach of danger. This is what is called fighting in retreat by echelon.

I have had frequent occasion to give this kind of work a close inspection, either by being attached to the general who directed the attack, or by leaving my horse to take a hand in the game with our brave infantry, and I do not hesitate to say that this kind of warfare is the truest test of a good soldier.

This mountain warfare does honor to our troops, not only by the resistance, the energy, and cunning of the foes they encounter, but also by the incredible fatigues they have to endure. It needs nothing more than the inborn carelessness, courage and good humor that is the basis of the French character, to enable these men selected by chance, men who have left behind them their families, their affections, and

their country, the most of them without ambition or the hope of recompense, to behave with as much bravery and energy in the combat, as patience and courage in the varied sufferings which are attendant on these expeditions.

One single trait of the character of the African soldier will suffice to make him appreciated at his just value.

However small his stipend, and however large his love for women or wine, at his return into garrison the soldier prefers the mountains of Kabylie, where there is nothing to hope for but privations, fatigues, and the bullet, to the plain, where booty and resources for comfortable life are all offered to him.

This is because that in Kabylie he is always sure of a battle, while he returns often from the plain without having burned a cartridge. This is the feeling of the infantry. It is not the same with the cavalier, who remembers the foray and plunder, and for this reason loves the plain as much as he detests the mountains.

If a tribe has become insubordinate, or thrown off the yoke of subjection, immediate measures are taken to inflict a heavy punishment.

It took three or four campaigns for the chiefs of our army to learn the various ruses of the native Sheiks, but that having been done, the chastisement follows always close on the heels of disorder and insurrection. Generally the French troops carry the field before them when they make a vigorous attack, even when the enemy is in force, unless it may be on those occasions, which are very rare, when the cavalry alone are sent against the natives; but as the Arab horsemen

are swift and bold, it is the retreat of an invading force which is always the most dangerous.

When the Arabs are taken by surprise on a night march, they fight fiercely for their tents and their herds, but when all resistance becomes useless, they retire slowly, sheltering their wives and children by their desperate charges, and when they have placed them beyond pursuit, they return to the battle-field more numerous and ferocious than ever, and strive to regain what they have lost.

The spectacle of an Arab column migrating from one place to another, with all its tent equipage, its baggage, with camels laden with women and children, and forty thousand head of cattle of every kind, and its thousands of mounted horsemen, winding slowly over the desert, is at once beautiful and imposing.

Suddenly the head of a French column moves in sight, and the picture changes from the stately march to the maddest disorder. The column hurries up, and if the troops have with them a battalion or two of infantry, the day is lost to the Arabs, who can do nothing more than charge the flanks of their foes, without effecting any great injury.

But the affair becomes more serious when our cavalry come to the attack alone or in numbers insufficient to surround the Arab column. The enemy then forms into scattered bands, and furiously with wild cries they charge against our troops, aiming at those points they find the weakest. The smoke and dust add to the confusion of the scene, and form a veil from which the white bournous or the red flame flashes out as the Arab wheels in his rapid evolu

tions, or fires his gun with as steady an aim from his saddle, as he would from the ground. It is only by the use of the greatest caution and coolness that an attack of this kind can result successfully, and in default of these qualities, or by the slightest confusion, the numerous and daring foes fall immediately on the bewildered soldier, and sweep over and bury him like the sands of the desert.

Within a few years our officers and soldiers have acquired great experience in African warfare, and we can reach and ruin an entire tribe without firing a shot. Formerly our officers had to trust entirely to the information derived from native chiefs, who often communicated to the hostile tribe the progress of our forces, as we marched to chastise them. But thanks to a new system, we are never placed in such positions any more. In every division, subdivision, and circle we have located an Arab office filled only by French officers, whose duty it is to watch the different tribes and report to the general in command, and by their means we can plan an attack, and reach a rebel tribe at any distance, without any anticipation of our intentions.

We will now speak of the third manner of African warfare on the desert of Sahara.

Although the desert tribes are more nomadic than the Chaouia, whose people rarely migrate beyond a certain comparatively narrow limit, yet they still have fixed habitations which serve as depots of arms and provisions, and places of refuge, and there are many villages built on the Oases in the northern part of the desert, and some of them quite to the south.

These villages are placed in the centre of the Oasis, and are

shaded with forests of palms, and terraced with gardens filled with luxuriant fruit-trees, the whole being encircled by a wall. Independently of these natural defences, each village is surrounded by an external wall, flanked by towers. In this intrenchment the inhabitants of the desert, gather together at the approach of danger, and fight with a determination that is fearfully destructive to the besieging enemy.

As an example I will give a few words in relation to the capture of Zaatcha, which occurred in the year 1849.

Bou Zian, the Sheik of this city, revolted from the French authority, and drew after him the Sheiks of all the neighboring villages. The commander of Batna marched against the offending tribe with a part of the second regiment of the line that he had under his command at that place. It was the intention of the general to carry the place by storm at the point of the bayonet, and the bravery and long experience of his officers and men fully justified him in the undertaking, but we had an enemy more dangerous than the Arabs' gun, and against which the bayonet was powerless.

After having killed or routed all the Arabs in the gardens, the attacking column dashed up to the wall of the place to scale it, but was arrested by a large ditch filled with water that surrounded the whole town. While the soldiers were fording or scrambling over this ditch as best they could, the Arabs from behind an embattled wall, shot them down without number. In spite of all these losses, the general in command persisted in the attack, and turned all his endeavors against one of the city gates.

During a whole hour our soldiers worked to make a breach

in the gate without success, and exposed all the while to a deadly fire from the walls. At each blow of the pioneer's axe came ten bullets from the besieged, and over the fallen axemen others marched calmly up to take their places.

Fearing a sortie of the besieged, at the moment when he should attempt a retrograde movement, the commander ordered a retreat, while still in a position to defend himself, and the siege was raised.

About two months afterwards, general Herbillon who was engaged in Kabylie during the first attack of Zaatcha, marched into the desert, and laid siege to this place.

I cannot recount all the thrilling events of this rude campaign, which will remain for ever engraven on the minds of those who participated in it, but I will only say that Zaatcha held out fifty-two days before our very best troops.

It was only after a desperate conflict, in which the chief exposed himself to the fire of the enemy like a simple soldier, that the place was carried by assault. Three columns advanced together under the command of Generals Canrobert, de Lourmel, and Barral, and climbing the walls and fording the ditches regardless of the withering fire from within, stormed the city, and all the defenders of the place, including Bou Zian, were killed at their posts.

Such is the African war, which is regarded by some persons in too light a manner; for the native, whether Arab or Kayle, is endowed with great individual bravery, and when the circumstances under which he fights are at all favorable, we come off victors only with great loss, and there is no hope or mercy for those who fall wounded on the field.

What is very singular in this war is, that opportunities for personal exploits rarely come to those that seek them, and at the same time often fall to those who never are expecting them.

After two years of African service in which, we had exchanged hundreds of shots, my arms were still unstained. Usually the infantry were making the attack while we were mere spectators, and when it came our turn to charge, although I hastened to disengage myself from the troops with Rousselet at my side, as he said, to see that I was not carried off, yet still, we never could reach our foes. Here or there we would see a burnous flash out from the smoke of combat, but it would disappear in the whirl of the battle, and we would only hear the whistling ball of the watchful cavalier singing a recognition to our charge.

At the bivouac, Rousselet and I often talked of our want of success, and mooted plans for the future, and it was finally agreed between us that we should join in the campaigns of Oran. He and I had both been appointed corporals, and we thought that if we should renounce our grade, we could easily change our regiment; so we returned to Guelma in the spring of 1844, with our minds made up to leave that part of the country for ever.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## MY FIRST EXPERIENCE IN LION HUNTING.

WHEN an event, either fortunate or unfortunate, happens to an Arab, he says, *mectoub*, it was so written.

The reader may judge for himself if the phrase is applicable to me.

One evening after our return to camp, from an unsuccessful foray, I had been to visit my horse, as I was always accustomed to do before retiring for the night, and was then slowly walking back and forward on the high rampart that ran near the stables, and overlooking the plain below, meditating of the still night, and thinking of my anticipated departure for Oran.

A group of native spalhis were sitting on the edge of the wall, silent and still as the stones of the fort. As I passed near them, one of their number, an officer, and an Arab like the others, took me by the hand, and drawing me towards him motioned me to sit down by the side of the group, which I did, and the same silence continued as before. The full moon that silvered all the landscape, fell on their white burnous and their bronzed faces, and I remarked an expression of sadness with them all. As it had been a long time since they had

visited their douars, on account of the length of the expedition, I supposed they had heard some bad news from their families, and I asked the officer, who spoke our language with great fluency, whether it was so.

"Listen," he said, pointing towards the open plain.

I listened and heard a distant sound, now sharp, and now heavy, but which appeared extremely loud, judging from the distance from which it came. Seeing that I heard it, the officer turned to me and said :

"Do you know what that is?"

"No," I answered.

"That is the lion, the lion of Archioua, who during the time that we have been in the field, has decimated our herds, and will yet take what is left."

"But since you have come back, and will to morrow return to your douars, you will hunt and kill him, and that will end the trouble?"

Never did a foolish speech meet with such a reception, as the one I had just made in the innocence of my heart. After innumerable sarcasms and jokes, they explained to me that the Arabs would rather let the lion take what he chose than attack him themselves, and they showed as plainly as two and two make four, that the lion has the perfect right to mock at all the Arab race.

It was growing late, and the Arabs were about retiring, when I said to the officer and his astonished spahis, "God willing, I who am no Arab, will kill the lion, and then he will do you no more mischief."

Letting my acquaintances account as they pleased for this

bold assertion, I resumed my seat on the rampart, and meditated on the wild intention I had conceived.

I cannot explain how, although passionately fond of the chase, I had forgotten there was such an animal as the lion 'n Africa, and was about to quit the country that offered to me such a pleasant future. I remembered the strength and prowess of the beast, and the respectful titles by which the Arabs were always accustomed to speak of him.

My heart leaped with joy in thinking that soon this all-powerful Seignor, the terror of the country, might bite the dust under the ball of a Christian dog, and I enjoyed in anticipation, the triumph of the feeble over the strong, and the power that would turn the Arab scorn and hatred into love and admiration.

As if to make me understand that my pride was carrying me too fast and too far, at this moment the roar of the lion again saluted my ear, and its muttering thunder seemed more formidable than ever.

I listened to his deep unparalleled voice, and to the echoes repeated from hill to hill, in the dark distance, and when it ceased I shivered from head to foot.

I had never seen the lion in his native freedom, but his voice told me that he who was thus endowed, and could, without exertion, make himself be heard in the volleying tones to which I had just listened, must be immensely great, and would regard a man as a right puny creature.

Without knowing how the animal could be attacked, I well understood that the task was a difficult one, and having again listened to his voice, I had to recall to my mind the promise

I had made to keep myself faithful to my resolution. When I estimated in my mind all the chances, fortunate and unfortunate, I thought the proposed attempt superhuman ; but again thinking of the motives that influenced me, I considered that my resolution was right before the Almighty, and then I felt as if I could succeed even in the impossible.

The next morning, after having passed the whole night on the ramparts, I communicated my projects to Rousselet, who received them with enthusiasm, not because he desired to aid me, for he was fully decided to leave the country, but because he saw that the attempt was bold and hazardous, and because he thought I could succeed in it.

It is ten years since I have heard or seen anything of Rousselet. I do not even know where he may be at the present time, but I would be glad if these lines ever meet his eye, that he should know that whenever I found myself in a desperate position, where I had need of a sure hand and bold heart, it was only of him that I thought.

Without any further delay, I put myself in communication with the spahis whose douars, situated on the Ouled-Meza, were often visited by the lion. As my intention of freeing them from their importunate guest did not appear to them to be very serious, and they considered that one victim more or less was not of much account, they readily proffered to accompany me in a survey of the country frequented by the animal.

I found four or five douars established on the right bank of the brook running through the plain, that belonged to the spahis and their families.

I was invited to rest under a tent that was immediately filled with visitors. At first, I thought this ceremony was an act of politeness, but it was not long before I found that they were all ridiculing me and my pretensions. I was beginning to learn and understand the language, and I heard several times the Arab word, *medjenoun*, crazy, uttered by the old men of the village.

I did not attempt to prove to them that I was in possession of all my faculties, but after a short repast, requested the services of a guide to point out to me the haunt of the lion.

A sort of Hercules who all the while I had been in the tent, had been stretched out in front of me with his chin resting on his two hands, and his eyes fixed on mine, bounded to his feet, and lifting up the curtain of the tent so as to show me the interior of the douar, said, in an angry tone :

"It is here that he comes at night, in the midst of the men who are speaking to you. Is this a beard that I hold in my hands?" he exclaimed, seizing his own with both hands; "Is this a man's arm?" throwing back the sleeve of his robe to his shoulder; "do you take us all for women, *you* who come here and ask us to lead you to the lion when he nightly comes to us to eat our substance, and we let him do it? Look here—the day you kill the lion, this beard of mine will fall to the ground, and I will turn and be your servant."

After this speech, at once curious and comical, the brave fellow not being able to contain himself longer, and not wanting to violate any of the laws of Arab hospitality,

marched out of the tent, draping himself in the folds of his burnous with a superb majesty.

A spahi then proposed that I should be placed in the neighborhood of the douar, to wait for the lion when he should come in the evening. With this, all the assembly cried out that I would hurt some of the people with my balls, and that if by chance I should wound the lion, it would make him dreadfully angry ; but if I absolutely intended to offer myself to him, there were many spots visited by his majesty where I could be placed, and where my folly would do harm to nobody.

I followed my guides towards the hill, and presently they pointed out to me a rock, surrounded by a heavy thicket that nearly concealed it in gloomy shadows, and told me that there the lion stopped for a moment when coming from his home in the Archioua to visit the scenes of his nightly repasts. I asked if it was possible to visit the Seignior of these domains in his own home ; they laughingly replied that none of them had ever been there, but that if I desired, they could readily put me on the road. In about a quarter of an hour more of fast walking, we struck a path of about three feet in width which came out of the woods.

"Here is the path," exclaimed the Arab who was leading the party ; "this is the road the lord of the manor follows when leaving the woods. There is another the other side of the brook, and both emerge to a point further up the hill. Now, if you wish to make his acquaintance, all you have to do is to build a cover for yourself, and then come here at evening with a bait to wait his good pleasure. When

you have killed him, we will come here to kiss your hands and feet, and to call you our master ; in the meanwhile we will go about our business."

Without more words the gentlemen retraced their steps to the douar.

As if these words had been a sort of command to me, I took my seat on a stone at the side of the path, and would have spent the whole day alone immersed in the various reflections they called up, had not a jackal that hovered around, by his screams recalled me to action, and the perception of the coming on of night.

It was already too late, and I was too poorly armed, to do anything that night, and I returned to the camp thinking of the cold reception that had been given me by the people of the village. Having come to their camps to free them from an enemy that pillaged their property, and whose anger they dare not awaken by any act of their own, I had hoped to see some expression of thankfulness, and some readiness to teach and to guide me. Instead of that, I had found them scoffing, distant, and almost menacing in their addresses, for the great Hercules of whom I have before spoken, gave evident symptoms of a desire to convince me by direct proof, that his arm was stronger than mine.

I concluded from all this, that my task was more difficult and hazardous than I had first supposed, and that since they all regarded my enterprise as quixotical and foolish, they would hail its success with so much the more joy and devotion, and after that time I did nothing but think of the means of success I might adopt.

With the assistance of several hands under the direction of an Arab who understood the system, I caused a covered blind to be made by the side of one of the paths used by the lion.

This was a hole in the ground of about a yard in depth, and breadth, covered with large trees for a roof, and loaded with the earth that was taken out from below, and with large stones. Several loopholes were made on the side towards the path, also a larger hole on the opposite side for a place of entrance. A great stone brought expressly for the purpose from a long distance, served as a door, and was so placed as to be able to be pulled shut from within.

The blind thus constructed was a perfect citadel, which I would readily have made in a simpler manner, had not the Arab who served as architect assured me that he would not be willing to pass the night there alone, and that the lion could readily draw me out of my retreat, by tearing a hole in the top if he should take a fancy so to do.

As I appeared to attach small consequence to this assertion, he related the following anecdote.

"The Pacha of Algiers had selected among the Turks of his army, some of the bravest to hunt the lion. One of them, Chackar by name, acquired a great reputation in that country. Every time that he returned crowned with success, and bearing as a trophy the skin of the beast slain in fight, the Pacha made him sit down by his side, an honor that he conferred on no other person, and besides the gold that he showered upon him at every victory, he gave to him a mantle of velvet, all embossed with silk and gold, called a caftan,

and which is given only to the chiefs of the highest rank. Chackar was ennobled with gifts and honors, and all his friends and relatives, and the Pacha himself said to him, 'Enough, Chackar, enough; let this be your last, God is with you, it is true, but do not abuse his bounties;' but Chackar still followed the chase as ardently as ever, and never seemed at home except when on the lion's trail.

"One day he arrived at Mahouna, his favorite hunting-ground, and the inhabitants received him as usual, with joy and gratitude; for there was a lion that, within a short time, had taken up his residence in the country, and was eating great and small, as if God had created them all only for his appetite.

"The first day the hunter devoted to repose, and in the evening a beef was killed in consideration of the brave man, and eaten in honor of the lion, whose funeral they celebrated in advance, with a fusillade of merry guns, in order that he might be well notified of his coming decease.

"On the morrow, the hunter visited the different blinds that he had made in the manner of this one, and he discovered the tracks of the lion near one of them, so he established himself there, and a little before nightfall, an Arab brought him a kid, destined for bait. Chackar entered first, the kid was pushed in afterwards, and then the door was closed, and the Arab having said, '*God be with you,*' took to his heels and was soon safe in his camp. The night was clear and still, and the Arabs on the plain listened for some sound that would tell of Chackar's success. About midnight the sound of a gun echoed through the mountains. The Arabs rushed from their tents, and they heard the lion roar

ing so loud that the rocks and the trees were shaken. The report of a second gun followed the first, then a third, and then the voice of the lion was still.

"On the following morning, all the natives from the neighboring douars hastened up the mountain with the early light, to find the blind where the hunter had been concealed, a perfect wreck from top to bottom. Chackar's gun and pistol and the body of the kid were buried under the ruin. In the midst of the trunks of trees that formed the roof, and on the stones were marks of blood and the print of huge claws; and the trail of a body that had been partly dragged and partly carried, led into the woods. Following these tracks for about twenty paces under the trees, the Arabs found the second pistol, and then the body of the hunter and his prey intertwined together like serpents."

"The head of Chackar was concealed in the mouth of the lion, and his left hand buried in his mane, while his right hand held the hilt of a dagger which was driven to the guard in the side of the animal.

"The three balls with which the Turk had loaded his musket, had struck the lion in his side behind the shoulder, the first pistol in the breast, and the third in the ear.

"You see from this," continued the Arab, as he finished his story, "that there is no shame in hiding oneself in a blind, and I promise you that when you are alone in this place you will think many a time of the fate of Chackar, and look to see if your roof is strong and tight."

What I would have liked, would have been to have met the lion boldly face to face, by daylight, but I had not thought

of doing the same by night, when the darkness destroyed all my powers of defence; nevertheless the manner of assassination that I was about adopting was very repugnant to me. It seemed as if I was laying a trap, and was nothing more than a common murderer; and in spite of the story that had been related, the veracity of which has since been proved to me, I suspected that this manner of hunting would be regarded by the natives as it was by me, only with disdain.

Not knowing the country and not being able to trust the counsels of the Arabs, I found myself in a very embarrassing position. It was only then and as a last resource that I concluded to use the blind I had made.

In order to have every convenience I consulted with the veterinary surgeon, who had charge of all the sick horses of the squadron, in order to get a dish fit for a lion, if not in quality at least in quantity, and he promised me what I wanted.. My comrades engaged to explain my absence during the night if it should be remarked, and on a beautiful evening in the month of April I went out of the camp wrapped in my burnous to conceal my arms, and joined the stable keeper on the edge of the woods, where he had a horse awaiting the sacrifice.

An hour after, the execution had taken place in front of my block house, and my companion had returned to the camp.

I employed the little of the daylight that remained in loading my army musket, and my two horse pistols, which composed my whole arsenal.

The blind was situated in the heart of the mountain, and on a little plateau that overlooked the plain. I watched the

distant horsemen, and the herds of cattle below, until the prospect became obscure, and then I entered my little fort.

Hardly had I ensconced myself within and carefully closed the door, before I heard footsteps along the path. In a moment more I heard the wagging of jaws that were devouring my bait with the greatest vigor. I looked through all the loop-holes, but could not see the body of the horse, although it was only five or six steps from me, and yet the animal continued to feed as fast as ever.

Was it the lion, or a hyena, or a jackal? My eyes not being able to inform me, I tried if my ears could give me any satisfactory indication, and sought to judge of the size of the beast by the noise he made at his meal. In about half an hour of listening, of watching and anxiety, I could hear not only the sound of one animal, but it appeared to me a legion, and a most infernal hubbub they made, not only near the house, but all around me and over my head. There was growling and walking, tearing and scratching, as if all the demons of hell had given rendezvous there for a bacchanalian orgie.

At one moment I thought the roof of my cell was about to fall in on my head under their tramping feet. Just as I seized my pistol, determined to sell my life as dearly as possible, the stone that occupied the place of a door was pushed down, and a head with two great eyes protruded in the opening. Without pausing to see what manner of beast it might be, I fired my pistol directly at the eyes and the animal rolled into my apartment writhing in the agonies of death.

That the reader may be as much reassured as I was on that fearful occasion, I will tell him that the animal proved

## THE LION KILLER.

to be only a jackal, one of the band who had been feasting the livelong night at my expense without any invitation, and had now paid with his life for his unpardonable curiosity, in poking his nose into my house to see my manner of living when out in the mountains.

The remainder of the night passed quietly away, and when the mountain loomed out of the shadows of night, my horse was still there, but the lion had not appeared.

On the next evening I came to my post, where I found, instead of my horse, only his skeleton, which was as cleanly dissected as though it had come from a cabinet of anatomy. It needed only a glance at the earth marked with the feet, and strewn with the feathers of vultures, to tell me who were the surgeons that had performed this dainty task.

I needed now another bait. While waiting a change for the worse in the health of the horses of our squadron, I thought I would try a kid, in imitation of Chackar.

The poor little thing cried as loud as it could while the daylight lasted, but when darkness had fallen, and until the next morning, it maintained a desperate silence. On the morrow the kid was there to pay me for my trouble, but with that exception I was no better off than I had been with my last attempt. During my last night I had not been altogether free from the importunities of the jackals although they did not eat my bait. These troublesome fellows, in spite of the lesson I had given them on the previous day, came scratching at my door, and snuffing between the logs on my roof. Some of them were so indiscreet as to put their noses up to my windows, when I puffed tobacco smoke in

their faces, and they fled away, sneezing and expressing their disgust at the smell of the weed by volleys of coughs.

On my return to Guelma I hunted up the Arab, and asked him how the Turk had induced the kid to cry during the night.

"It is very easy," he said, "you have only to tie a string to its ear, and lead the other end to your blind, and then whenever the kid keeps silent all you have to do is to pull the cord and the pain will make it bleat fast enough."

In writing this book I have engaged to inform the reader of the different sensations that I have felt in this kind of chase. I will now avow a weakness that did not permit me to torture an inoffensive kid, and that very day I returned the kid to its herd.

A little time after I procured a second worn-out horse, and had him killed on the same spot as the other. The first night was passed without any result, and in order to avoid a second dissection by the vultures, I covered up the body with branches, and laid heavy stones on them. During the day I could see the vultures in a cloud hovering over my horse, but when in the evening I had returned to my post the animal was untouched.

To recount the many nights that I had passed in this manner, and how many mules and horses I had sacrificed to be eaten by the same beasts without the lion ever deigning to draw nigh, would only shock the reader as it did the hunter. I will only say for those who have any desire to kill without any choice of the kind of beasts, that they can in single night, in the same situation, make a most perfect collection

of carnivorous wild beasts, excepting, however, the lion. I contented myself with some hyenas and vultures which some of my friends had requested me to procure for them, and the rest were suffered to go free.

After the first night of my entry into the blind I had heard nothing of the lion. From time to time I questioned the spahis about him, and they went on to tell of the losses they were constantly sustaining on his account. I could not understand the reason of my failure, and commenced to get weary of my task and despair of success, when one evening as I was going up to my post on the path I had so often followed, I saw with joy the immense tracks of my game in the sandy path.

I had never seen his track before, but there was no mistaking it, the lion had walked that morning where I was now standing.

But how was it that he could come here and I had not seen his footprints this morning? It must be that after I had descended the mountain he had ascended it by the same road, and so I avoided meeting him on the path that he had trodden an hour afterwards. I remembered that the evening before, I had been informed that the squadron was to ride out for parade, and that to avoid punishment I had quitted my post with the early dawn to return to camp, but still it was light enough to have seen the tracks if they had existed then. By following my usual course I reached my blind without losing the trail from sight a moment.

As I had been in such haste in the morning I had not covered the carcase with branches as I usually did, neverthe-

less, the vultures remembering a slaughter I had made among them a few days previous, had not disturbed it. It was easy to see that the lion had passed my bait without even stopping to smell it.

I thought perhaps he was satisfied with food, but that he would certainly come down that evening since he had seen the dead horse on his route. My heart bounded with pleasure. The mountain appeared to have grown more beautiful, now that I was sure of the presence of its lord, and I did not notice the weary hours, or the odor of the horse putrifying in the heat, and I fancied my solitary covert in the woods an abode of delight.

I should add that I examined again the roof of my cell, and wondered to myself how long it would resist the attacks of those paws whose huge traces I saw around me.

At the moment I was about to enter my cover I heard from the mountain side above me, the loud squeal of a hog, and then the cracking of branches and the rolling of stones as though a troop of cavalry was charging down the hill. Without being able to explain the cause of this sudden uproar, I cocked my gun and pistols, and turning my face to the ravine, awaited the avalanche that seemed to be rolling towards me. I could not tell from whence it was coming, as it seemed to be on the right and the left, and was the more suspicious from being so totally inexplicable.

All of a sudden an enormous wild boar rushed out in the path, grunting and snorting, and ran down the hill at his utmost gallop. I let him pass without a shot and right on behind him came a whole troop of his comrades, as though

possessed of the devil, an immense herd, and they rushed down the hill, burying themselves in the wood that bounded the circuitous path. When they had all escaped, and silence had resumed its sway, I tried to discover the cause of this sudden panic. I remembered the piercing cry I had just heard, and I concluded that the lion, tired of beefsteaks and disgusted with my horse dinner, had concluded to vary his diet with bacon, and I entered my blind more for the purpose of sleeping than for watching, mentally resolving that with the morning light I should have my suspicions verified by a personal examination.

In about an hour the lion commenced roaring. At first softly, as though talking to himself, and then so loud that the walls of my tent trembled with the shock. I was suffocating in my hole, and not being able to see anything either from before or behind, I opened the door and walked out into the open air the better to hear the sound.

The roarings of the lion were not very frequent; there was an interval of fifteen minutes between them, sometimes more, and sometimes less.

They commenced by a species of hollow guttural and prolonged sigh, which was made apparently without effort. After a silence of several seconds he would make a species of growling coming from the breast and belching from the mouth, as though made by blowing out the cheeks and keeping the lips closed. This growling at first very low, though with a great volume, was gradually increased up to a very high key, and then gradually subsided as it began.

After having repeated this noise, a noise whose force I

cannot describe, five or six times, he would finish by the same number of low harsh cries, which seemed as though they were caused by an attempt to cast up something from his throat, the last one being very prolonged. It seemed as if to make it the lion must have opened his mouth to its full extent, and attempted to vomit.

I tried to find some analogy between the roar of the lion, and any noise I had theretofore heard but could find none. The bellowing of the bull when angry, seemed to me the nearest to it, although the voice of the one to the other was as the report of a musket to the boom of a cannon.

After roaring for about two hours apparently without leaving his place, he descended to the bottom of the valley, doubtless to drink as his silence continued for a long time, then he commenced again louder than ever, all the while descending the mountain.

Shortly after I saw fires lit far out on the plain, and heard the distant shouts of men and women, and the barking of dogs from the douars. I supposed that the Arabs had been awakened by the lion, and were lighting their fires and making the racket in order to drive him away. As near as I could judge, the lion followed the same road which I had travelled with the Arabs the first time I came up the mountain.

After a few moments of silence he roared among the douars, when I could see the fires redoubling in number, and could hear the sound of the uproar increasing on every side, and yet the voice of the lion surmounted all this hubbub, like a roll of thunder as the night king continued his route, appa-

rently compelling all the world when he went out to walk, to get up from their beds and make music and illuminations on his road precisely as would be done for the most powerful monarch. I heard his regular roaring all night, until near daylight, when he entered into his seigniory of Archioua, that lay at three leagues from my post of observation.

As soon as it was sufficiently light the next morning to distinguish a foot-print in the forest, I took up the trail of the wild hogs I have before spoken of, to see what had been the fate of the one who so lustily squealed at twilight on the previous evening.

On reaching the edge of a clearing situated about a thousand yards from my blind, I saw a dark stain on the half-burned grass that grew in the opening. It was the head of a wild boar armed with teeth remarkably large and white. This with the tail, the four feet and some of the entrails, was all that remained of the feast.

One might think that the earth would have been torn and marked by the struggle between the two animals, the boar and the lion. I was astonished to see only the marks of the hind feet of the lion; they were much longer, but less broad than the front feet, and seemed to have been used to strike down the prey in its flight. Noticing a large mastic thicket a little distance in advance of the woods, I looked to see if the lion had not made this his place of ambuscade to watch the herd of hogs, and I found I was correct; for in the dust where the red partridges had been used to come and shuffle during the middle of the day when the sun was hot, were the marks of the lion's body, where he had lain himself down to

wait. In measuring the distance from the mastic tree to the head of the boar, I found it just twelve paces. After having decided this nice point in controversy, and made the observations that I thought might some day be useful, I followed the footsteps of the lion after his supper. I found that he had lain down in many places around the edge of the clearing, and then had gone through the woods to the brook at the bottom of the valley, where he had again lain down to drink.

At about a hundred paces from this he had left the woods, and followed a path to the douars, to which he had given such a night of terror.

In seeing me passing, several Arabs came out to ask if I had heard the lion. I remembered too keenly the bad reception they had once given me to answer very kindly. As they remarked how coldly I responded to their questions, they commenced telling me that if I should ever succeed in freeing them from this scourge, no one would be equal to me in their country, and that in testimony of such a benefaction they would give me one half of all they possessed. Without believing all they told me, which seemed to be said under the effect of fear, I said to them I would do all that lay in my power; and that the past night had been more fortunate for me than for the lion.

In fact, I had learned during that night a world of things concerning the lion, of which, up to that time, I had not the slightest idea. In the space of a few miles I had had the opportunity of examining, of following, and comparing the

tracks of the beast ; being a whole course of instruction in venery.

I had learned that instead of going across country, like other wild animals, he followed the beaten trail.

I had learned, to my own cost, that he preferred the living animal for his food to any dead body, no matter how conveniently placed.

I had heard and studied the tones of his voice, and the meaning of his roar.

I had learned that he would follow his own road, no matter what men might do to prevent him, and, lastly, I had learned that many leagues were to him the course of an evening's promenade.

I can hardly tell what I had not learned in that one night, and what a horizon of anticipations had opened before my eyes. Hereafter, no more close and cowardly blinds ; no more baiting with dead animals, whose taint sickened the night air ; no more posts arranged beforehand, whose unvariable dullness tired the hunter's patience ; but instead of all that, hereafter there would be the walk by the full of the African moon, and the sudden meeting of pursuer and pursued by the forest lake, or the mountain road, and at last the one brave tête-à-tête, so long desired, with no obstacle between me and the lion.

It was with all these anticipations and souvenirs crowding on my mind, that I regained the camp at a later hour than ordinarily.

On the next day, while I was sitting in the Café Maure,

which I frequented to learn the Arab language, I saw four or five natives come in, carrying some fresh skins, which seemed to me to have been taken from beeves. After having sent one of their number towards the camp, with an injunction to hasten, they sat down in silence on the mat-covered floor.

As I visited this café only for the purpose of learning the language and customs of the people, each new-comer was a subject of regard. Nothing escaped me, and if I did not understand the language, their expressive native gestures, and the play of their countenances, gave me the key to the whole conversation.

In France, when you enter a café the waiters run in the greatest hurry to know your wishes and to satisfy your wants. In Africa you might enter an establishment of this kind sit down, and sleep there all night, without any one remarking your presence; so the new-comers took their places without any one turning aside even to look at them.

I also had ceased regarding this taciturn and motionless group, when their comrade, who had been sent away, returned, leading a native spahi by the hand, and followed by two or three others.

I remarked to myself that they had a disturbed air, and that they sat down in the circle without exchanging any of the ceremonies or compliments of the day, which is a very unusual thing with the Arabs, and contrary to all custom.

"What has happened?" at last said a spahi, in a short gruff voice.

"Look at this," said one of the new-comers, throwing down a bloody skin in the centre of the circle.

"And this," said another, casting down a second skin.

"And this," said another, placing a similar trophy on the other two.

"What do you say to that? here are the skins of three of our best working oxen, and another was carried to the mountain to be eaten; and what makes it more humiliating, is that they were all taken from before our tents at sundown, while they were hitched to the cart."

The reader will pardon me, if for once in my life I rejoiced at the misery of others; for I committed this fault on this occasion, when I learned that they were speaking of the lion who had just sacrificed for his personal comfort a hecatomb of beef.

One would have thought that the animal, if he had been a moderate liver, might have contented himself with one ox for his supper, and I am of that opinion myself, unless, as it appears, that the blood of these oxen are to him what a good bottle of moselle is to some of our bon-vivants after a summer's dinner. Indeed it seems that a few swallows of blood, to this royal proprietor of broad-lands, is not more in proportion to the size of his dinner and the measure of his wealth, than the bottle of champagne that trickles down the throat of a Parisian gourmand.

I rejoiced at these tokens of prowess on the part of the seignior and master, and as the spahis charged their relatives with cowardice in abandoning their teams at the approach of the lion, the interview seemed to be about terminating in a very sanguinary manner. They manaced and defied each other, and without the intervention of the assistants of the

*café* they would doubtless have attacked each other in order to revenge their common enemy.

When their feelings were somewhat calmed, and they were seated again on their mats, the head of the establishment, who was a Turk, and an old soldier of the Bey of Constantine, recounted the feats of some of his comrades, and finished by a comparison with the Romans but little flattering to the latter.

I will here explain the various terms used in Algeria to designate the French.

In the villages the Arabs, who begin to lead a civilized life in order to please their rulers, call the French, *Francis*. Among the wild tribes they say *Roumi*, Romans, *Nazari*, Nazarenes, and *Kafer*, Pagans. The first two expressions are those most in use, and the latter is the sign of the most profound scorn. It need not be inferred that when they speak of us as Romans and Nazarenes that they mean any compliment; you have but to look at the Arab's face to see the utter dislike that mantles his dark blood whenever the name comes to his lips.

As I could not suffer the Turk to treat us thus disparagingly, I joined in the conversation to tell them I knew a little Roman who could cause all the Turks to be forgotten by gaining greater renown than they. Being urged by the Musselmen present to name this person of whose existence they were utterly ignorant, I turned to the spahis and said:

"If I obtain permission from my officers I will go with you this very day in search of the lion."

They looked at me from head to foot as if to measure my

height and weight, and a wag who frequented the *café*, where he had made a sort of reputation by his jokes and play upon words, took advantage of the pause to say :—

“Let him go, the lion won’t attack him for fear of not being able to find the pieces after the first blow.”

This man was sitting on the window-ledge that looked out over the market, and I advanced up to him quietly, as though without intending any retaliation, and the next second he was astonished to find himself out in the street upon the shelf of a crockery vendor, who immediately seized upon him for damages done to his goods. Every one laughed at this occurrence, as the man had created no little ill feeling by his unpleasant manners and cutting tongue, and I left the *café* very well pleased with the moral effect of the correction on the minds of the Arabs.

An hour afterwards thirty or forty of the native spahis came to my quarters, and we went together to the commandant to get leave of absence for a few days. As soon as he understood the motive of my demand,<sup>47</sup> he flatly refused, telling me I was a fool.

The next day my friends the spahis tried again, without any better success.

A few days after I renewed my request to the commandant, who endeavoring to dissuade me, related the particulars of a hunt that was made by General Yusuf, from which the hunting party returned with the loss of a dozen men and horses. This was done for the purpose of discouraging me in my attempt, but my mind was so fully made up that nothing could turn me aside. The captain at last understood

my feelings, and engaged to get the permission of Monsieur de Tourville, who commanded at this time in the district of Guelma.

There was nothing more for me to do than to procure suitable arms for my expedition, the one barrellled rifle answering very well for a blind, but not safe to be carried in the open field when two shots would be absolutely necessary. I knew among the colonists of Guelma one of my countrymen named D'Olivari, who was a good hunter, and owned a double barrellled rifle of number sixteen bore, which he was kind enough to lend me, and I entered on my campaign during the first of June.

I left the camp in company with a spahi of the squadron named Bon Aziz, whose douar, situated near the Ouled Zimba, at two leagues from Guelma, had been sadly ravaged by the lion. We reached the douar a little before night, and I had time to see the country which I was about to hunt. It was a wide and deep valley, the two sides of which were covered by a thick wood, and the place so solitary and savage seemed to smell of lion a league away. The douar where we were to pass the night, was established on the open valley, and surrounded by a hedge of olive trees of about eight feet in height by three feet in width.

We entered by an opening in the hedge, and found ourselves in the centre of the camp, where we were immediately assailed by a multitude of villianous dogs, that bit our horses' legs, and sprang up from time to time to seize our own.

Two or three Arabs came out of the tents in order to open

a road for us with sticks and stones among the crowd of brutes that disputed our entrance, and we dismounted in front of the tent of Bon Aziz, who did us the honors of the place with all the grace of a king.

Every man, woman and child in the douar came forward to examine me, and they expressed their different opinions with all the frankness that they would have done had I been a hundred leagues away.

When the supper hour arrived the women and children disappeared and the men of the tent, together with the invited guests, squatted themselves in two circles. A man then brought and placed in the centre of the circle where I was sitting, an iron vase filled with water, into which each of the guests, without hesitation stuck his hands, more or less dirty, and then the vase was carried to the second group, that did the same. This was the preparatory ablution, and it is safe to say that it was needed.

In a few minutes after we heard a great racket in that part of the tent that belongs to the women, and a man was seen coming in carrying a dish on his head, and preceded, followed and surrounded by a crowd of dogs of a shaggy coat and ugly countenance, that were pushing, scrambling, biting, and fighting each other up to the very guests that sat in the circle. The men in attendance tried their best to keep them back, but without success, until they threatened to take the supper by assault from the head of the waiter who was bringing it.

With us we hardly ever punish a dog even with a whip; here, on the contrary, I have seen them struck often with the

tent poles, which are young trees with the branches trimmed off. If, sometimes, the beast runs away doubled up under the blow, he oftener turns upon his assailant, who is obliged to defend himself with a great deal of skill to avoid being severely bitten. One cannot understand this spectacle without having seen it, and it appeared to me more than ridiculous, particularly when an Arab gravely handed to me a stick of the same kind with which to defend myself, and preserve my food while at dinner.

Order having been again established, the man in attendance at last reached our party, and deposited in the midst of the circle a large wooden dish of about a yard in diameter, filled to the brim with *couscoussou*, a kind of semoule, and covered over with the half of a sheep. Hardly had the tray been set down, when all the guests attacked the mutton with nature's forks, and an appetite worthy of the brutes that formed an outer circle, and were kept at a distance by two or three men armed with sticks. I watched the operation of eating with the greatest curiosity, but with little relish. My host noticing that I did not partake, came around to my side and snatching away a piece of mutton from the fingers of my busy neighbors, tore it in strips and laid it before me. As even this did not tempt me, he made a sort of hole in the *couscoussou* and then pouring into it a species of liquid colored white and brown, which seemed to be a mixture of milk and soup, he stirred it up with his finger as if he was making mortar.

Seeing that I still was in doubt about joining in their feast, he sent for a wooden cup with which I dipped up some *couscoussou* from that portion of the dish that seemed the

least handled. This I found to be a very good article of food, and I thought I would soon become accustomed to this national dish, if I was not obliged to adopt the republican manners of the guests with whom I was dining.

After our circle had dined, the huge tray was lifted over our heads, and carried to the second group that was patiently waiting below. Then the jar of water which we had already used was presented to us the second time, accompanied with a piece of black soap.

The divers other things I had seen at this refined meal, but which I cannot describe, had so disgusted me with the company I was in that I turned my back to them, letting them take it as they would, and took my seat on the carpet which was spread next to the division of the tent separating us from the apartment of the females, resolved to wait for some more favorable time for dining, and in the meanwhile to amuse myself by watching the manners of my neighbors.

I had hardly been seated with my back against the women's tent, before I felt some one drawing the skirts of my coat from behind.

The French who are always a little presumptuous in regard to the women, think they have nothing to do but to show themselves in order to please a lady. I have heard a certain goose among my countrymen declare, after he had made an excursion among the tribes of Algeria, that the women were so much in love with him, that they would seize him by the lapel of his burnous when asleep at night under his tent. I will now give my experience. Turning around to see who might be the fair creature that was so interested in the

stranger, I saw, I confess it frankly, dear reader, as the truth compels me to disclose it, I saw the eyes and white teeth of one of the ugliest dogs in the whole tribe, as he was hauling in my coat-tail, and endeavoring to get a bite at my legs from the other side of the canvas.

This is a fair specimen of the amiability of these villainous curs, that bite whatever comes within their reach, even their masters, and that are all the while having desperate battles among themselves, where the vanquished are often eaten by the victors. One can understand from this, how doubly unpleasant the familiarity of these animals must be to strangers visiting the douar. About bed-time these gentlemen, I refer to the dogs, climb up on the top of the tents, without doubt hoping thereby to gain a better view of the surrounding landscape. Then the sleeper has to endure over his head a chorus of five or six discordant voices, that join in the uproar that is made the live-long night on the neighboring tents, and altogether forming a noise that would waken the dead.

If by chance there comes a momentary lull, an Arab who may be sleeping next to you, and whom you thought fast locked in the arms of Morpheus, commences to halloo with all his strength, whereupon the doggerel is renewed louder than ever.

Contrary to the habits of other people, noise brings sleep to Arab eyes, and silence awakens them; which is explained by the necessity they are under of being always on guard. If it happens that some chilly dog takes refuge under the tent to snatch a little rest, <sup>he</sup> he is immediately assailed by the men

and women, who shower on him a storm of blows and curses that sound strangely to the European who is waked from his first soft slumber.

This is a fair sample of the many nights I have passed in this way, without describing the insects and household *varmints* without name or number, that devour alike the host and his guest.

I found this, my first night in camp, excessively long, and more than once I regretted my blind in the mountain, where I could at least take some rest between the intervals of watching. But fatigue at last brought sleep to my eyes, and I gradually had travelled to the land of dreams, where I would have wandered until morning had I not been awakened by a sudden increase in the barking around and above me. An Arab who was on guard, came rushing into the tent, and jumping over my body, commenced unceremoniously kicking up all the sleepers.

In an instant, all the men who the moment before were snoring around me, were on their feet, shouting and vociferating with such vehemence that the voices of the dogs were completely drowned. The women and children joined in their turn to form a chorus of yells in a higher key.

I stumbled out of my tent and saw fires lighted before all the tents, and Bou-Aziz carrying dry wood with some of his comrades. Having reached the limits of the park, an armful of wood was lighted and thrown over the hedge, with cries of Jew, pagan, and heathen. In a few moments, all the people of the douar had joined in this sport with a zest that made

me think it was a species of fireworks that they were accustomed to display for their amusement.

At the moment when these new kind of fusees were burning with their brightest flame, and the concert of men, women, children and dogs had attained its height, everything was suddenly hushed, and disappeared as if by enchantment.

The firemen dropped their brands, and men and dogs made a rush, head over heels to the entrance of the tents they had just left, dragging me with them in their flight. The dogs just before so noisy and anxious to bite every one within reach, immediately became dumb and as gentle as lambs.

All of a sudden, in the midst of this general silence, a fearful noise arose from the enclosure of the douar, that made me tremble in spite of myself; and in an instant the tent was invaded by a herd of animals that came crowding and rushing on one another, and trampling down men and women without thought or pity. There were horned cattle and sheep, camels and asses, horses and mules, and they all bellowed, and whinnied, and brayed as they rushed over and past us, tearing down tents and fences in an utter rout. It seemed as if the trumpet had blown for the final judgment. I had never fancied such a babel of beastly sounds, even in the ark of Father Noah.

I do not know how I came there, but I found myself in the women's apartment together with crying children and frightened animals. I hastened to get out to learn what was going on, and found the Arabs on every side armed with their guns,

and the park, lately so crowded with animals, completely deserted.

I understood less and less every moment, what was the meaning of all this, when an old woman that belonged to the family of Bou-Aziz came to relieve me of my embarrassment, saying, while she tore out her grey hairs, "It is the lion, see how he treats us, the Jew, the pagan, the cousin of the devil!"

I now comprehended the meaning of it all, except the men running about hither and thither with their arms. The old woman explained that a part of the cattle had taken refuge in the tents, and a part had broken a hole in the hedge and escaped, and the men were now endeavoring to drive them back.

At this moment I saw Bou-Aziz pushing before him several head of horned cattle, and in a little while the park was as full as before, with the exception of the black bull that was missing, and that had, without doubt, served as a breakfast for the lion. I say, breakfast, for hardly had order been re-established before the tents began to redden with the early light.

Bou-Aziz, whom I reproached for not having warned me that the lion was coming, declared that it was a most dangerous thing to attack him in the neighborhood of the douar, and to prove the correctness of his assertion, he related to me the following occurrence that had happened the previous year.

"A lion known throughout all the country by the name of

*el-Ahor*, which signifies lame, had visited a certain douar so constantly, that it was nearly depopulated, and one of its inmates had become so much enraged that he resolved to put an end to the importunities of the robber once and for all. This was a hair-brained resolve, and the Arab took good care to keep his intentions secret.

As the lion took not the least notice of the fires that were lighted, or the noise that was made at his approach, nor of the talismans that were written by the most famous *marabouts*, and as he followed the douar wherever it might be removed, the people had at last become resigned to the will of God, and made no further resistance.

With the shades of the evening, the Arab took his place near the spot where the enemy was accustomed to jump over the hedge to get at the cattle. About midnight, the jabber of the jackal, that always follows the lion, could be heard from the plain, and the dogs began to bark. The Arab cocked his gun, and in a few minutes the lion cleared the hedge at a single bound, and stood within three paces of him.

The gun sounded, and in the twinkling of an eye, the lion with a broken shoulder bounded on the venturesome man, and crushed him to the earth, and then rushed upon the tent that happened to stand nearest to him, killing all that he found within it, with the exception of a woman with a child in her arms, who managed to reach the next tent and climbed on the top of it, hoping that the lion would rather seek the women who were shrieking beneath, than climb after her. But the animal, furious to see this last victim escaping,

followed her tracks, and springing on the tent after her, the whole of the frail structure fell to the ground under his weight. The mad beast, feeling the living bodies under him struggling in the folds of the tent, relinquished his hold of the woman and child, already dead and mutilated, and with teeth and claws, commenced tearing and crushing every moving thing he could find under his paws.

To crown the tragedy, the fires caught the fallen tent, and though driving away the lion, burned every living soul of the family that had not been already destroyed by the raging beast, all the inhabitants of the douar that were free, having taken advantage of the occurrence to escape.

On the morrow, forty armed men returned to the scene of the disaster, to find only the charred and mutilated bodies of their friends; the lion had departed after proving to the children of Adam that there was no strength equal to his, and that whatever they possessed was owned together in common.

"And this lion, what has become of him?" I asked.

"The lion is still living, he is cured of his wound, only he limps in his fore foot; we have often seen him, and he is called *el Haib*, the limper, and *Bou-Acherin-Radjel*, murderer of twenty men."

I understood, after the story, that the lion was never bewildered by his nocturnal excursions among the tents of the lowlands, and could readily comprehend why it was that Bou-Aziz did not want me to know of his coming.

Nevertheless, I resolved to see if I could find what had become of the missing black bull; and early in the morning I

started on the search, together with Bou-Aziz and several of the Arabs, among whom was the unhappy late proprietor of the animal.

We found the body about a gun-shot from the camp; the lion had eaten a shoulder and thigh of the weight of about fifty pounds.

The owner of the animal, after walking two or three times around the body, came to me and said :

“This is the tenth he has taken from me since spring; there are forty remaining, and I will give you half of them if you will free me from the destroyer. There is only one thing I ask : that is to be informed of it before the rest, that I may pull out his cursed beard with my own hands.

The Arabs who were with him, thinking that it might encourage me, made the same offers in proportion to the amount of cattle they possessed, or the losses they had sustained. Only one among them all decried me, saying that he did not see how Bou-Aziz, who was a man ordinarily of good of sense, could encourage such a foolish undertaking.

I was not altogether satisfied with the answer to this observation. Instead of taking a serious view of the matter, he answered with a strange smile, *Achkoun Yarf?* “who knows?”

There was something in his smile and ambiguous reply that seemed to say, “You imbeciles, what difference does it make to any of us if this man gets chewed up. If he succeeds, we will be gainers; and if he loses his beard, we will be none the worse for it, it will be only one Christian the less.”

I returned to the douar somewhat saddened by the kindly feelings displayed by my host for my personal safety.

I received that day, the visit of two or three hundred Arabs, from neighboring villages, and we held in the open air a sort of court to decide upon the fate of the lion.

If the accused was absent, and was neither represented by counsel, nor had called witnesses in his own behalf, it still could be said on the other side, that the charges brought against him were beyond all justification, and it would have been difficult to have found the slightest mitigating circumstance in such a fearful category of misdeeds.

There was, therefore, no pleading, either for or against, the criminal, but the assembly resolved itself in one great jury, and after unanimously finding him guilty, they consulted like judges, as to who among them having suffered the most, should have the revenge of pulling out his beard.

Each one of the judges present having made an estimate of his loss, it was found there were many who had suffered equally, which presented another unforeseen difficulty in the way of a decision.

Then an old man all in tatters, and supporting his chin on a stick, cried out :

"I am the one to tear out the lion's beard, I who have lost everything but this old burnous that a beggar would not wear." And thus speaking he exposed to our eyes the most abject misery and nakedness.

As the Arabs laughed at the patriarch, who had only lost a couple of cows, I took the floor in turn, and said :

"To thee I give the lion's beard, if it please God to make me successful."

The poor man came to my side as fast as his legs would carry him, and before I could prevent him, had kissed me on the head, and cheeks, and hands, saying :

"You will succeed, my child, you will succeed." Then whispering in my ear, he said : "You are a Roman, but I don't care, if you can kill this lion I will give you my daughter, or if you like it better I will adopt you as my own son."

At first I was overcome at this brilliant offer, so contrary to all the principles and customs of the Musselmén, and if after a little I had to laugh at the glorious opening in life it pointed out for me, I was still the more persuaded I had adopted the right course, and that the hatred of the Arabs would fall with my first lion. I had already forgotten the scene with Bou-Aziz, and resolved that before long he should have better feelings toward me and my people.

As the day waned, and the sun was kissing the western horizon, I hastened to quit the douar to go on the mountain, being the more anxious to commence my work, as I had leave of absence for only three days. Bou-Aziz and myself shouldered our guns and left the camp to the pleasure of all the Arabs, with the exception of a few kind-hearted souls, who suggested that we had better return to Guelma.

As the natives do not understand how one can be willing to go on foot who has the means of riding, Bou-Aziz wanted me to mount my horse, but I refused, being persuaded that he would be a trouble instead of a service, and we set out to

walk. After following for about an hour a forest path, we gained a bare plateau on the ridge of the hill overlooking all the country.

Another path here joined into the one we had been travelling, and Bou-Aziz told me that this place was often visited by the lion, and that we could hear him roar from there after dark, and perchance see him come down the hill. As he used the plural *we* in speaking, I told him that I intended to do the fighting, and that I only needed him as guide. He replied that this was precisely his own intention, and that I could assure myself that the moment there was anything like a collision between me and the lion, he would relieve me from his presence with a great deal of pleasure.

Having settled these preliminaries I loaded my rifle with great care, and took my place on a high rock that overlooked the different paths of the lion, and yet was quite near the open ground I before mentioned.

The night came on without our having seen anything but the wild hogs as they came rooting in the glades, the jackals prowling about, and the hares that fed and gambolled at our very feet, secure in the wild fastnesses of the hills. Bou-Aziz had supposed I was going to return to camp at dark, and was surprised to see me making my preparations to spend the night. Nevertheless his mind had become so much interested in the attempt, that he only left me for a little while, and then returned with two Arabs, bringing with them my supper. Seeing that this might give rise to difficulty, I told Bou-Aziz once for all, that he need not take care of my meals, that in the morning we would put into the

cape of our burnous a meal cake with a handful of dates, and that would suffice. As to the water we had the mountain streams, and as they sufficed for the lion, they would answer for us. The men who had brought the couscoussou being afraid to return to the douar alone, we kept them with us all night, but the morning came without any lion.

The entire day being spent in repose, the evening found Bou-Aziz and myself again at our posts, he a little more confident, and I more reserved than ever. When it came dark, he told me that we would be more likely to meet the lion by following up the different paths than by remaining in the same place.

Accordingly, we left our post on the rock, and struck into a path that led down the hills towards the plain. The heavens were serene and the moon flooded the pure air with silver, leaving even the shadows under the woods in a mellow twilight. The path was so narrow that we had to march single file, and I followed my guide, pausing now and then to watch the effect of the light and shadow, or the gleam like snow of the distant water or sleeping tents.

All of a sudden Bou-Aziz turned around, and seizing me by the sleeve, drew me aside in the woods. Once there, he crouched down and obliged me to do the same. Seeing that I was about to speak, he said :

“ Chut—keep quiet or we are lost.”

“ What do you mean ?” I said in my usual tone. “ Here we are marching on the path in order to meet the lion, and now you hide me that he may not see us ?”

“ It is a cloud ” (*saga*), he said ; “ keep still.”

I was utterly confused by this answer of my comrade. I at first thought that he had seen the lion, and was afraid of a cloud obscuring the moon at the moment that we were about to meet him, which would certainly have been dangerous. But the moon was sailing in beauty over the trees, and as far as the eye could reach there were nothing but stars.

"There, they have heard us, and are on our track, cock your gun."

I listened, and heard the sound of murmuring voices and the rustling of burnous against the trees.

"But these are men," I whispered to Bou-Aziz.

"Yes," he replied, "a band of marauders." Judging from the noise they made there could not have been less than a dozen. I had two barrels to fire and Bou-Aziz another, and in spite of my dagger and his sabre, it seemed to me that we were in as bad a position as two unlucky wights might ever find themselves.

After cocking my gun and trying to see if my knife was loose in its sheath, I sprang to my feet, saying, "Come, let us charge the beggars."

He was on his feet almost as soon as myself, and throwing the skirt of his burnous over his shoulder, he cried, "You dogs, you never saw men—wait till we teach you a lesson!" and we rushed forth from our concealment to be saluted with peals of laughter, and hear our names coupled with many a covert joke.

"Bah! they are my cousins," said Bou-Aziz, laughing "they are going out for a walk, let's find out something about the lion."

I was more surprised than ever. Were these men just going out for an excursion, or were they a band of robbers and assassins? As a climax to my wonder, I recognized among the band that had been tracking us like wild beasts several of the guests with whom I had dined so badly on the first night of my arrival at the douar.

After laughing heartily on both sides, the men told us that they heard the douars on the Ouled-Bou-Sousa making a great noise, and that, doubtless, the lion had been over there to pass the night. We consulted about following him, but Bou-Aziz said that it was too far, and we would reach there too late for any service. I then proposed that we should take some place of concealment, and wait for the lion until he returned to his lair with the morning, and the plan was immediately adopted. The *cloud*, as they called themselves, gave us the honor of their company to the edge of the wood, when they left us to continue their nocturnal expedition.

As we had now nothing to do but wait until day dawn with our eyes fixed on the plain, awaiting the motions of our game, I questioned my comrade in regard to our late encounter, and I will here relate what he told me.

It may seem a breach of confidence to write for the public what was told me in secret, but since that time I have proved it to be true by my own experience, and I give it to the world that it may be of use to those travelling in Africa, or entrusted with the government of the Arab tribes.

"You," commenced Bou-Aziz, "love the child that your wife bears you, equally much if it is a male or a female."

I beg pardon of my readers ; but this was the way my companion expressed himself.

“With the Arabs, however, there is more joy over the birth of a colt than a girl, but a male child never comes into the world without the firing of guns in honor of his advent.

“On him reposes the honor and hope of the family, of the douar and the tribe, who expect from him great personal bravery ; and if they do not find this quality early exhibited, the child soon finds himself the subject of scorn and dislike, even from his father.

“The women, who with you look upon every man in the light of a husband, particularly regard those who are handsome. With us the women compare a handsome man to a female, and a brave man to a lion.”

Here I observed that these two qualities might be united in the same person, particularly among the Arabs, who are a fine-looking race ; and I asked my instructor if an Arab woman would love a man who was infirm, lame, hump-backed, or mutilated, and at the same time endowed with great bravery. His answer seems to me to be full of good sense and imbued with the true spirit of philosophy.

“Deformity would never be an object of dislike to a woman if it was the result of an encounter in which the man had proved his valor. If it was a natural deformity, the woman would despise him, because she would know that God in creating him in that manner had not intended to create a man.”

Under this generally received opinion, the unfortunate

creature who is brought into the African world a cripple, never seeks to gain those qualities from which nature and reputation has debarred him, but forms one of a separate class half way between men and beasts. Fortunately, however, this class of persons is very small. During twelve years passed in Africa, I have never encountered but one hunchback, and he was carried around from tribe to tribe, like a strange animal, and the children heaped upon him jokes and dates, without number, in their curiosity and glee.

"You can therefore understand," continued Bou-Aziz, "why the boys as soon as they grow to man's estate, endeavor to gain the respect of the men of their tribe, and the regard of the women, still more difficult to win. For you see our women are never mistaken about the character of a man, and they elevate or cast him down according as their judgment is favorable or not.

"Formerly, when our tribes were at war among themselves or against the French, it was an easy matter for our young men to give proof of their courage, but since our swords have returned to their scabbards, what are we to do?

"There are occasionally family feuds which give to a young man the occasion of stealing by night under the tent of an opponent, and in spite of the watchfulness of the dogs, stabbing him to the heart, which is a feat infinitely more difficult and courageous than your duels in the open air by daylight.

"But all of us do not have a father's or brother's death to revenge, and when we have not, there is nothing left for us, by which we can show to the world that we are men, but gallant adventures or plundering excursions.

“To follow, during the darkness of the night, the mountain paths worn by the lion, is of itself no child’s sport. But to enter the precincts of a well-guarded douar, and creep under the curtain of a tent to enjoy the embraces of a mistress, sleeping by the side of her husband, when you well know there are strong hands and ready pistols all around to punish your reckless love, this you must confess is worthy of a bold heart, and the hero who performs it may well swear by his beard, and walk with a high head among his fellows. That is the manner that young men of any soul, prove it to sleepy husbands who carry a stone in their bosoms in place of a heart.

“As I have already said, the woman who is proud of the bravery of her husband will always be faithful to him; the woman who finds she is coupled with a poltroon who has never done anything but eat couscoussou by day, and snore soundly at night, will take the greatest pleasure in deceiving him, and conferring his rights upon men better able to guard them. By such a course of conduct the woman never offends her own conscience, and public opinion very justly exonerates her fair name from all blemish.

“As she has been joined without her own consent to a man whom she never knew until after marriage, the moment that she learns his true character, and discovers that he is a poltroon, she endeavors to get rid of him in order to get a better one, for the Arab widow may choose a husband according to her fancy.

“Then she selects a lover from the young men of her acquaintance, one who has a lion’s heart and an iron arm, that will not shrink from the sweet meetings, dangerous

though they be, even when the rendezvous is given under the family tent, and who is ready to do battle with the husband for the favor of those dear eyes that brighten the darkest night. It sometimes happens that the woman herself removes her husband from the field of his earthly avocations by the blow of a mallet or a draught of arsenic.

I pause in the repetition of Bou-Aziz's dissertation, hearing my reader call out, "Stop there, where are the laws of the land that allow murders to be committed on every side, out of mere pleasure or unhallowed love?"

The law of the land I will give you; it is as follows: if a man is killed by fire, steel, or poison, the accused shall be cited to appear before a council of war, that shall condemn him to death or the galleys.

Or the convicted criminal shall pay the price of blood, called the *dyah* by the Arabs, which is one thousand francs for a man, and five hundred for a woman. Reparation in the shape of damages is also imposed upon the accused, which is a sum equal to one-half of the *dyah*.

The citation to appear before the court martial, does not take place until the accusation has been examined at the Arab Agency, and sufficient proof has been gathered for a conviction. In the other event, the parents accept the price of blood, and forego their revenge. It sometimes happens that a man is killed without the government being able to tell or to suspect the assassins, and then the whole tribe pays the forfeit.

This measure, generally adopted throughout Africa, has brought about excellent results, particularly as regards the

safety of travellers, and it has brought to light a crowd of murderers who otherwise would have remained for ever unknown.

What I have just said about the law of murder, is only applicable to the tribes under the military government. The civil courts apply the French laws to the natives living under their jurisdiction, but the district governed in this manner is so small, that it is useless to speak of it except in terms of comparison. Is it better to apply to the Arabs the laws we found in force with them, or to bring them under subjection of the laws of our country?

This is a question of much importance in connection with the moral conquest of Algeria. There are so many things to be said on each side, that I will leave the question to those who are more interested in it than I, only referring in passing to the difficulties that must ever be experienced in Africa in punishing crimes against the person and property, when the whole people are so thoroughly nomadic. How is it possible to get at the truth of an affair of this kind, when its causes, as well as the deed itself, took place among a people whose customs and language are so little known to us?

The government should require of all its agents who are charged with these duties in Africa, a perfect knowledge of the language, customs, and habits of the people in their own homes, and under their very tents. This qualification should be the more strictly enforced with the military and civil officers, whose duty it is to be the intermediaries between the people and the government. There are men whose long residence in Africa has left them nothing more to acquire, but I am sorry to say that they are so few that one could readily enumerate them.

I return to Bou-Aziz and his famous (*saga*), or cloud, to which he had as yet given me no explanation.

I demanded of him, "Where do they go on these nocturnal expeditions—where, for example, are your brothers and cousins going this evening?"

"I can't say precisely where my brother and cousins are going, but they don't usually return empty handed."

After a great many turnings and hesitations, I learned from him that the young men who go out after this fashion at night, are nothing better than robbers and assassins. Robbers, because they carry off by ruse or by force the cattle from the douars they visit, and assassins because they kill whoever opposes them in their attempt, and sometimes those whom they encounter on the road. According to Bou-Aziz, the Arab who has never killed a man is entitled to very little respect.

Once on the subject that seemed to him to be very interesting, he finished by telling me that after having lost all his herds in a razzia, he had made his fortune good again by pillaging here and there, and killing whoever disputed his laudable endeavors.

Nevertheless, while still talking, stretched out on the grass, the day began to dawn, and the lion had not appeared.

Would you could have been with me that morning, fellow-hunter, perched on a cliff by the edge of the forest, overlooking the hundred paths that converged hither from the plains crowded with animals of every kind, that were returning to the shelter of the woods. From the earliest light to sunrise it was one continuous defile of wild game, marching leisurely along, according to their different modes or fancies, as though

no lion had ever existed. Bou-Aziz, accustomed to the spectacle, paid no attention to it, scanning the distant fields in search of our nobler prey; but when he saw the wild hogs walking home with leisure confidence, he said that the lion was not in the neighborhood. At length, the sun showed his red face over the purple hills, painting the earth with crimson, and warming the air with his breath, and we returned to the douar.

After several hours of sleep, I told Bou-Aziz that I would like, if possible, to visit the den of the lion, not only for the chance of meeting him on the road, but also to gratify my curiosity in seeing the domestic arrangements of the sylvan king.

This was a bold request to make, but the hardy fellow decided, after some hesitation, to accompany me with a dozen of his friends.

Judging from the preparations of these men, one would have thought that they were going to battle, instead of going to make a visit of curiosity to a wild beast's lair, which proved that the fortress of the beast was none the less difficult to enter, because it was without defences.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to know what is the Arab's battle costume, and I will attempt to describe it.

We all know, or rather we do not all know, that the Arab dress commences with a long shirt, descending to the middle of the leg, without any collar, and with sleeves as large as those on a surplice. Above this shirt is then placed a *haik*, made of silk or linen, which envelops the body and breast, and winds around the head in five or six folds, where it is retained in its place by a white or brown cord, made of camel's hair. Outside of all that, are two or three burnous, which complete the national costume.

The covering for the feet, which is not uniform, only protects the bottom and sides for the footmen: if it is a cava-

rier, he wears a species of red morocco boot, called *themaques*.

When an Arab is preparing for some expedition of danger, where he may be called on to fight on foot, he commences by taking off his sandals, if he has any. Then he lays aside his burnous which might be in the way, his camel's hair cord, by which he might get strangled, and his haik which might get torn. He only retains a red cap to protect his head, and a shirt which he raises above his knee, by means of a leathern girdle at his waist. Nothing is left that can in the least interfere with the activity of the body, except the loose sleeves that are drawn up to the shoulder, and then fastened behind the back.

Add to this a cartridge-box on one side, a yataghan on the other, one or two pistols behind the back, and a gun six feet in length in the hand, and then you have the complete war costume of the country.

There is another pretty of much the same kind, with the exception of the arms, and it marks the professional robber who roams abroad either alone or in company. These fellows, in order to have a respectable and inoffensive appearance, leave their guns behind them, and fasten around their bodies under their shirt, a complete armament, the more dangerous for being invisible.

It was with a dozen of these bandit-looking fellows, whom I first described, that I made my first call upon the lion at his own residence. I had expected rocks and caverns of a savage and gloomy appearance, but I found nothing but a beautiful wood.

While examining this spot, known all through the country as the Lion's Garden, I could easily understand how it had been chosen by its royal occupant. It was a beautiful thicket of wild olive trees, so closely joined together that they all seemed to have grown from one root. The dark tint of their leaves contrasted strongly with the prevailing green of the

forest, and gave a certain twilight air that well befitted the kingly retreat, and called forth respect and awe from the visitors.

Up to the time of reaching these olive trees, I had been closely followed by all my valorous comrades, but the moment I approached the precincts of the Garden, they fell back and let me precede them, awaiting my return at a safe distance behind. Three of the number, however, preferred the railleries of their comrades to the anger of the lion, and had long since gone home, and the countenances of those that were left, became ludicrously long and grave.

As I advanced, step by step, with difficulty under this obscure arbor, where the verdure above shut out all sunlight, and the soil beneath my feet was impressed with the tread of the lion, my heart beat louder and stronger.

At every step I was pulled by the arm, or by the skirts of my coat, by those behind me, and beseeched by trembling voices, praying me to go slowly, and to be cautious; and when I turned my head I saw my Arabs' faces absolutely pale with fear, in spite of their dingy skin. I would willingly have sent them all to the devil, if by that means I could have been free from their importunities, and I took the first opportunity of telling them to wait in a little opening we crossed, till my return.

The grass in this little glade was marked in many places by the beds the lion had lately made. It was here that when he awoke, with the coming of evening, he came forth to make his toilet, like a cat, and to embellish his face and comb his moustache, previous to descending the hills to visit the douars on the plains, and from here he announced his coming by his first low muttered roar.

It was with a good deal of difficulty that I persuaded the Arabs to remain in this place while I was gone, and it was only their sensitive fear of ridicule that prevented their beating a precipitate retreat. Bou-Aziz having insisted so hard on accom-

panying me, that I believed it was not merely for form's sake, I gave him permission, and we continued our researches together.

Not far from the clearing, I found several sleeping-places the lion had made, to be used, sometimes one and sometimes another, according to his fancy. All the roots, stones and leaves that interfered with the softness of the couch, had been carefully removed by the sybarite sleeper, and the ground between the different beds was covered with the bark of the trees that he had scratched off while amusing himself, or sharpening his claws.

While I was examining these curious details of the bearded king, my attention was roused by a low growling noise, like the commencement of a lion's roar, accompanied by the cracking of branches. My companion, leaning forward towards me, whispered, "Did you hear that?" I nodded assent, and he continued with such a piteous air that it made me smile, "The master is not pleased at our coming here like two thieves."

"What if he isn't?" I replied.

"Oh, you will see in a moment more," he continued, creeping close to me.

The branches continued to crack, and the noise to increase, when Bou-Aziz putting his ear to the ground, shouted out, with pleasure lighting up his whole face, "It isn't the lion, it isn't the lion, but only the fire our friends have lit in the grass below."

Sure enough, in a few moments more the fire had caught the whole thicket, and we came near being roasted alive by these rascals, who had decamped without giving us any notice.

We were obliged to hasten away, and it being now too late to seek the other haunts of the lion, we went to a spring where he sometimes came to drink, and waited for the night.



we returned to the tent where we had left our horses, and for the first time I saw symptoms of respect from the natives. The host, seeing that I desired to sleep, closed his tent, and sent away all his family that I might not be disturbed.

I had hoped to have won this consideration only by the merit of success, but since they all attributed the absence of the lion to some innate power of mine, I began myself to believe, not in my power to frighten away the animal, but in the protection of an invisible hand, without whose sustaining power we can achieve but little in situations of mortal danger.

When my eyes first opened in the tent of my host, after a long and refreshing sleep, I saw around me a circle of Arabs seated in silence on the ground, awaiting my awakening. They had entered so softly, and sat so quietly, that I had not even been aware of their presence. When I had risen to a sitting posture, one of them came towards me, and with an air of sadness, cried out :

"*Chera Allah ! Chera Allah !* the justice of God ! the justice of God !" and thirty voices from the circle responded in the same wild tone, "*Chera Allah ! Chera Allah !*"

"What's the matter ? explain !" I called out, confused by the novel spectacle, and the wild cries of my visitors. They all hushed in a moment, and the one who had arisen, spoke as follows :

"In the name of Allah, listen to what I have to tell thee, and grant me justice if I have the right on my side.

"I had a beautiful mare that my people had offered to buy of me for ten camels ; would I sell my mare whom I loved as the pupils of my eyes ?

"Yesterday, after dinner, I rode her to the brook to give her a bath, and then I led her to the edge of the woods, while I returned to make my ablutions and say my prayers. While in the water, I thought I heard my mare rolling, but

I did not look to see, as she often played me that trick, and I only had to wash her over again.

"I had finished my prayers, and was going up the bank, when a heavy footfall sounded above me, and I looked and beheld what makes my blood run cold merely in thinking of it. I beheld a lion looking down at me with a smile on his countenance.

"My mare, my mare!" I cried, throwing the water in his face, 'where is my beautiful, my love?'

"He answered not, but mockingly stretched himself out on the grass and looked down at me.

"I became mad with grief, and threw stones at him, but he did not move, and then I saw my beautiful one stretched out on the ground where I had left her, and all around the grass was wet with her blood.

"I moved to go near her, but the lion bounded in front of me, roaring like the thunder in the heavens.

"I sprang back into the brook and plunged into the deepest water. When I came again to the sunlight, the lion was standing at the brink, lapping the water and keeping his great eyes fixed on me.

"May the water you drink poison you,' I cried, 'you dog, you pagan; may you die before you gorge yourself on my beautiful one.'

"The lion paid no attention to me, he didn't even move when I walked out of the brook, and as far as I could see him while running home, he stood there drinking as calmly as though he was not a thief, and a fiend.

"This monster has a stomach like the sea, a stomach that drinks up our rivers and consumes all our substance, and is ever empty.

"Thou seest, oh heaven-sent-stranger, that I am wronged, and that I am right in coming to thee—render me justice."

"*Chèra Allah! Chèra Allah!*" repeated all the companions of the speaker, still seated in their circle, "we have no

more sleep and no more security. It will suffice if you come to our douars, and we will give you the half of all we have."

I endeavored to make my audience understand that my presence could not intimidate the lion, and that if he had not roared during the nights that I was in the country, it was only owing to his good pleasure, and that if he came back when I was gone it was merely because he had so chosen to act. But what are explanations worth with a people as superstitious as the Arabs. All my reasoning did not alter their convictions. At last an Arab, whom I recognized by his pure language, his importance of bearing, and the chaplet he constantly carried in his white hands, as one of the wise men of the country, arose and said :

"For a long time every one has been speaking of a Roman who had the reputation of a lion hunter, and they spoke of his blinds on the hills of Guelma. While he remained at a distance, or followed the lion after the fashion of the Arabs, we mocked his pretensions ; pardon the doubt that may have offended you, oh seignior. It was because we know how both the lion and man are created, and that the prophet has told us, 'God has given to man the strength of a man, but to the lion the strength of forty men, in order that he might make us remember *that all return to God that made them.*' After wards when we heard that this stranger was among us, hunting the lion without blind or fort, *eye to eye*, we thought him a dead man. We were afraid that his kindred would hold us responsible for his blood, so we consulted the wise men who know all things, and the wise men said to us :

"'God is great, and Mahomet is His prophet, and he can do what he listeth. This man, who comes from beyond seas, is not a Roman, but a servant of God. If he waits for the lion, *eye to eye*, 'tis because his heart is of steel and his eye of fire. God made him thus to bow down those who are strong in themselves. The lion will fly from his presence as we fly

before the lion, but yet this ravager will die by his hand, and not only he but many others. Find out this man, he will bring peace to your tent. Kiss his hand, it will protect you. Shower blessings on his head, for God has sent you a savior in him whom he has chosen from all the world. *So let it be.*

"This is what the wise men said to us, and thou hast made their words true by chasing away the lion by thy presence only. But we are all children of the same Adam, and it is not right that one tribe should monopolize thy presence at the expense of others who come to pray for the same protection. Follow us to our douars, where thy coming is awaited by great and small, and where they told us at parting, don't come back unless you bring him with you."

"I will go with you," I said, rising, "under one promise, and that is that you will show me the lion within eight days, being the time fixed for my return to camp."

They promised everything, and I set out with my heart full of hope.

El Archioua, the country I was going to explore, is situated between the two rivers, the Ouled-bou-Sousa and the Ouled-Aliah ; its aspect is equally wild, as the district I have before described.

On my arrival at the douars of Archioua I was received with open arms, and the reins of my horse were seized by a tumultuous and noisy multitude, that disputed for the honor of my entertainment ; but I gave the preference to the Arab who had told the pathetic tale of the loss of his mare.

If the men were full of joy and enthusiasm at my arrival, it was not the same with the women of the tribe, who did not conceal their suspicion, and under a thousand pretexts came to look at me through the curtains of the tent. More than once my attentive ear was greeted with the sound of the word, *roumi*, which I had supposed no longer applicable to me. If some of the women said among themselves, "Poor young fellow, he is going to be devoured ;" others did not

endeavor to conceal their dissatisfaction in seeing a Nazarene in their tents, and gave evil prophecies for my success.

This constant aversion of the women was of the less consequence to me, now that I had the good opinion of the men, yet nevertheless I anxiously looked forward to the time when I should command their respect.

Accordingly, I told Bou-Aziz that we would start in an hour so as to spend as much of the seven remaining days as possible on the mountains. He seemed anxious in regard to the manner that we should live in the woods, but I told him we could take our customary supply of cakes and dates, and if this did not suffice for him, that there were a plenty of douars in the neighborhood of the hills where he might go to get a more substantial meal. This pleased him well, and he immediately commenced preparations for our departure together with our host, who had made up his mind to accompany us.

I was a spectator of a curious scene that took place between the latter gentleman and the ladies of his household, who in no wise relished his intended departure.

At the moment that he was taking out his gun from its cover in his tent, seated quietly by my side, one of his wives bounded like a panther out of that portion of the tent reserved for females into the place where we were seated, and before the husband could comprehend the reason of this act, so contrary to all Arab ideas of propriety, she had snatched the gun from his hands and had escaped into her own apartment.

The husband glanced at me from under his turban, to see what I thought of this novel proceeding, but I acted as though I had not seen it, and continued my preparations.

He then lifted the curtain that separated the two apartments, and passed into his wife's chamber. I now heard a very animated discussion arising between the two spouses. The husband wanted his gun, but the lady remained firm saying, "You are mad, let this *dog of a Christian* give him

self as food to the lion, since he has not father nor mother, nor wife nor children; but you, you shall not go.

"Therefore, because he is childless he ought to revenge me the loss of my beautiful mare?"

"Oh! this beautiful mare," cried several shrill voices at once, "oh! you ought to be revenged for its loss, since you loved it more than us or your children, and since you lost your head when you lost your horse."

"Will you hold your tongues, you dogs of wives, and let me have my gun and go?"

"Go—go then," shrieked the women in a chorus, "and I hope the lion will claw you well for it!"

The sound of half a dozen heavy blows followed this Christian wish on the part of the ladies, and it appeared that the correction was more efficacious than words, for in a moment the injured husband appeared with his gun in one hand and a big stick in the other. Nothing more was seen of the ladies, although until we left the tent we heard nothing but sobs and moans from the canvas Eden.

One hour after we were in the forest, and as the night came on apace, had taken our position by the side of a path, when a distant roll of thunder, that needed no interpretation, came to our ears.

"It is at Bou-Sousa," said Bou-Aziz, "the very country we came from yesterday."

It was two good hours' walk from where we were to where the lion was roaring, yet I said to my companions that I would go there, either with them or alone. They told me there were two rivers to cross; I said they would have nothing to wet but their shirts and so we set off at a fast walk.

On arriving at the first gully, my guides offered their services to pull off my boots and pantaloons, but I answered their offer by walking through the water which in the deepest place came up to my armpits. While wading I heard one of the men say to the other,

"This devil of a Christian will drown us like two dogs in the dark."

"Your wives were right in stopping you," answered Bou-Aziz, laughing, "and you will find after you have followed him for a week, that you will be twenty pounds the lighter."

This conversation, carried on in the midst of the river, was interrupted by a singular encounter, which I will mention as a curious incident of African travel.

When mounting the bank of the river I had looked all around me at every bush and stone, to guard against any surprise. For a moment, while stepping up the bank, I caught sight of a thick-set tree growing in our path, when I thought I remarked it moving to the right. A moment after, I saw the same tree, and it seemed to move to the left. But in a moment more, the question could not be decided at all, for the tree had altogether disappeared.

I halted till Bou-Aziz came to my side, when I communicated to him what I had seen, and he said,

"They are night robbers, let us straight at the dogs."

A rather curious name I thought for my friend to apply to gentlemen of his own profession.

In a moment we were on the spot when the tree had disappeared, and we found it lying flat on the ground. It was a beautiful mastic, about twelve feet in height and bearing thick-set branches from the root to the top. While I was walking around this peripatetic plant, trying to make out what manner of tree it might be, it suddenly arose to its feet, if feet it had, and two men perfectly naked and without any weapons, walked out from under it, and politely bowing, said to us, "Peace be with you."

"Do you understand all that?" I said to Bou-Aziz, who was standing by, regarding these novel travellers with a disdainful air.

"No," he said, "we will just strangle them or shoot them as you please, which shall it be?"

"Oh, you don't want our lives," said the poor devils, falling at my feet, "you couldn't do that. We are saved when we can touch your dress, for you are the Roman who hunts the lion, and you would not slay defenceless men."

"Defenceless, eh! What is this, then?" said Bou-Aziz, who threw out from the branches of the tree a pistol with a barrel about a foot in length.

"Oh! it is not mine," cried out one of the marauders, "it isn't mine, I will swear by the head of the Roman."

"Nor mine," said the other, throwing a glance of disdain, and the epithet of traitor and coward, at his companion in misfortune.

At this instant Bou-Aziz drew a second pistol out of the ambulating tree, then two cartridge-boxes, and then a bunch of false keys to open the hobbles that are used to fasten horses, and lastly two poniards.

"And this!" called out Bou-Aziz, at every new discovery.

"Not ours—not ours," repeated the marauders, swearing to the truth of their assertion, now by the head of the Roman, and now by the head of the Nazarene.

"You are infamous liars, not worthy of the least pity, and you are to follow us that you may be sent to-morrow to the camp at Guelma," I said, as I shook off their embraces.

"We don't lie," they cried louder than ever, in piteous accents, "these arms are not ours, they were loaned to us."

This subterfuge appeared so comical, that I could not resist laughing, and the fellows seeing my amusement became more pressing than ever.

"You are wrong," said Bou-Aziz, "for these hyenas would have devoured you had they met you alone."

"Coward! You don't know what a night robber is, you dare not go abroad except in the day-time or by moon-light," said one of the marauders, placing himself fiercely before Bou-Aziz

"You were sucking your mother's milk when I was chief

of the cloud," retorted haughtily Bou-Aziz. "And I was born son of Bou-Rajah."

"Oh pardon," cried the marauder, abasing himself to the earth, "I know thee by name but have never seen thee, thou art greater than we, and we are but children before thee. Yet believe us, young as we are, we look on the Roman as the lord of the night. Wherever we meet him we give way for him, and he might kill us all without our ever hurting a hair of his head."

To the great regret of Bou-Aziz, who wanted very much to keep them, I returned the weapons to the men, upon the condition that I should not hear from them while in the country, and that they would engage to keep their comrades out of my path under pain of being shot down without pity.

"Thank you, master," they replied in parting, "the hunter of the lion is equal to the lion, and we are only jackals." A few minutes after, we could hear them calling in the distance, "*Bahnadrie ba*, we are only jackals."

We still kept on our way, although I had not heard the lion roar for some time, and asked Bou-Aziz what it meant. He said that he was preparing at that moment to attack some douar, but that we would be soon informed of his presence by the sound of the dogs and hurrahs.

So we continued our course, talking of the adventure we had just met, and I asked Bou-Aziz to explain the use the marauders made of the tree. He said that it was a ruse to approach the douars without being observed, and to escape notice of other gentlemen of the same profession, whom they might encounter in numbers greater than their own. Those sportsmen who have ever made use of the artificial tree, or the walking hut, which is in use in some parts of France, can readily understand the utility of such a ruse on the plains of Algeria.

"But how do they avoid the lions?" I asked of Bou-Aziz.

"Will the master harm his own servants?" he replied.

"Are the robbers then servants to the lion?"

"When he encounters them with booty he takes what suits him best, when he meets them empty handed he makes them work for him."

"But how does the lion recognize his servants?"

"By their toilet. Those who have no shirt he can recognize a league off. Those who wear only a shirt he can see half a league off; those who wear more than a shirt he does not recognize at all, and eats them or kills them with fright."

It was about one o'clock in the morning when we reached the banks of the Ouled-bou-Sousa, which we crossed in the same manner as the first river. As we approached the douars, we found the Arabs all asleep, the dogs quiet, and nothing visible but the fires that were burning at a douar a little way off, to which I sent Bou-Aziz to find out some news.

"There is nothing for us to do," he said on returning, followed by several Arabs, "but to go back where we came from. This douar that offers us hospitality has been visited by the lion, and as he has not roared since, we cannot tell the way he has gone."

I had resolved not to enter a tent during the whole of my leave of absence, and so after my two comrades had been to the douar to get some refreshment, we returned to the edge of the forest to await the coming of daylight, and return of the wild animals that were roaming the plain. This day, as on the others, we could overlook the defile of wild game of every kind escaping from the light and heat of the plain to the dusky woods. A spectacle full of interest for the hunter, and that brought to my mind the lines of my friend Leon Bertrand:

When sun-rise gemmed the prairie grass,  
The loitering stags to covert pass.  
With lithesome step they track'd the dew,  
While herald birds before them flew,

And bowed their crests where sunshine lay,  
In golden bars across their way.  
A stately march to music free  
That chimed beneath the forest tree!

But alas! the sad disappointment was repeated, and I counted all these beasts of the desert and plain, stags with their kingly crowns, and beasts of prey, mingled with wild hogs and tapirs, but the king of beasts was not there.

I spent the whole of my remaining time in the woods, sleeping during the day in thickets, and at night beating up the paths frequented by the lion, until my leave of absence had expired, when I returned to the camp at Guelma.

The next day and the day following, the complaints of the Arabs came to the camp more numerous than ever, and it was by reason of their importunity that I had granted to me another leave of absence for five days, that was told me should be my last.

For the first few days and nights the lion seemed to be hidden in the earth. I was at my wits' end, when a shepherd came to me, saying that the cattle he was tending upon the edge of the woods had scented the lion, and had run in a great fright to the douar.

It was about five o'clock when this news was brought me, and it took two hours to reach the designated place. I sent back the horses with the Arabs who accompanied us, and kept with me only Bou-Aziz, a native spahi named Ben-Oumbark, and a dog that bore the glorious cognomen of Lion.

While riding, I had carried my gun by a strap on my shoulder, and when I was about loading it, I discovered that the hammer of the left barrel had dropped off, therefore I could only make a single shot. This discovery was exceedingly mortifying, and at another time might have made me hesitate about risking an encounter, but as it was my last day of absence, I would do my best as I was, and leave the rest to fate. I loaded the right barrel of my rifle

with the greatest care, and selected a place to await for the awaking of the lion.

Already night drew the curtains of the earth. Distant objects disappeared, and nearer ones assumed a dusky hue, while the shadows blackened in the forests, under the cork trees. I knew that there was no moon that night, and yet each minute shortened the twilight, and nothing announced the coming of the lion, unless perchance it might be the absence of the wild boars that were usually rooting in the forest glades.

I can hardly tell the anguish and anxiety that tortured my mind. I counted, and recounted the days that had passed since I left the camp, and I came to the conclusion that I must go back on the morrow, and this time with no hope of ever trying the chase again.

My companions, harassed by dangers, and worn out with fatigues, were anxious to avoid passing the night in beating the mountain paths, and had risen from the turf where they were stretched, with the intention of leaving. Bou-Aziz pointed to the stars that were already burning brightly in the sky, and said :

"It is too late to meet him here, he has already left the woods for the plains by some other path."

I could not bear to leave, though I saw my companions shoulder their guns, and start.

"You can go," I said, "I will follow you by and by."

They had hardly taken ten steps when the heavy roar of the lion sounded in the ravine below. I was so wild with delight that, not thinking of the condition of my gun, I sprang into the woods to run straight to the lion, followed by my two comrades. When the sound ceased I paused to wait.

Bou-Aziz and Ben-Oumbark were close on my heels, pale as two spirits, and gesticulating to each other that I had gone mad. In few a moments more the lion roared again, about a hundred paces distant, when I rushed forward in

the direction of the sound, with the impetuosity of a wild boar, instead of the prudence of a hunter.

When the roar ceased, I made another halt in a small opening, where I was rejoined by my two companions. The dog, that until then did not seem to understand what was required of him, threw up his nose in the air, and with his bristles raised, and his tail low, commenced taking a scent that he followed into the woods. In a little while after, he came running back, all doubled up with fear, and crouched himself directly between my legs.

In a moment more I heard heavy steps on the leaves that carpeted the woods, and the rubbing of a large body against the trees that bounded the clearing. I knew it was the lion, that had risen from his lair, and was coming right to where we stood.

Bou-Aziz and the spahi stood with their guns to their shoulders, awaiting the coming struggle with firm hearts. I motioned them to a mastic tree, a few steps behind me, enjoining them with my hand to remain there.

These brave fellows were deserving of the highest honor, for in spite of their mortal fear, they would not leave me alone. You may call this kind of courage by what name you please, but I consider it one of the strongest tests of a man's mind to remain a quiet spectator of a doubtful combat when his own life depends upon the issue.

The lion slowly approached, and I could measure with my senses the distance that separated us. Now I heard his steps—now his rustling against the trees—and now his heavy and regular breathing. I stepped one or two paces further forward, towards the edge of the opening, where he was to come out, to have as close a shot as possible.

I could still hear his steps at thirty paces distant, then at twenty, then at fifteen, and yet I was all the while afraid lest he might turn back, or in some manner avoid me, or that my gun might miss fire.

What if he should turn aside? what if he should not come out of the woods? With every new sound, my heart beat in heavy throbs with the intoxication of hope. Now all the life in my body rushed through my veins, then again my very life was stilled by the emotion.

The lion, after a momentary pause, that appeared to me an age, started again, and I could see the slender tops of a tree, whose base he brushed, trembling as he passed almost within sight. Now, no more barrier between me and him, but the thick foliage a single tree.

I glanced at the sight on my gun, it was barely visible; thanks to the lingering day, that still hung on the horizon, the transparency of the air, and the stars that were already burning above me. This was enough for a close shot, and I stepped still further ahead that I might have a nearer mark.

But still the animal did not show himself, and I began to fear lest he should have the instinct of my presence, and, instead of walking slowly out, would clear the mastic tree with a single bound.

As if to justify my fears, he commenced growling, at first with two or three guttural sighs, and then increasing to the full force of his voice.

Fellow hunter, it is for you I am writing. You only can understand and feel my emotions. There in the solemn forest at night, standing alone in front of a thicket from whence are coming roars that would drown the roll of the thunder. I thought of my single ball to hurl against a foe that has the strength of a hundred men in his single arm, and that kills without mercy when he is not killed himself.

You can truly say that if I had counted on my own strength that my heart would then have been troubled, my eye dim, and my hand trembling. I confess that those roars made me feel my own littleness, and that without a firm will

and an absolute confidence founded upon that. So grateful around us and supports us, I would have faltered and . . . But instead of that I could hear that roar so near me without a fear, and to the last remained the master of my own heart and the director of my actions.

When I heard the lion making his last steps I moved a little to one side.

His enormous head came out from the dense foliage, as he stepped with a commanding grace into the light of the open glade, and then he halted half exposed, half concealed; while his great eyes dilated on me with a look of astonishment. I took my aim between the eye and ear, and pressed the trigger.

From that instant until the report of the piece, my heart absolutely ceased to beat.

With the explosion of the gun, the smoke shut out everything from my view, but a long roar of agony stunned my ear, and frightened the forest.

My two Arabs sprung to their feet, but without moving from their places. I waited with one knee on the ground, and my poniard in my hand, until the smoke that obscured the view should dissipate.

Then I saw, gradually, first a paw—and, heavens! what a paw for a living beast—then a shoulder, then the dishevelled mane, and at last the whole lion stretched out on his side without sign of life.

“Beware! don’t go near him!” shouted Bou-Aziz, as he threw a large stone at the body; it fell on his head and bounced off; he did not move, *the lion was dead*.

That was the evening of the eighth of July, one thousand eight hundred and forty-four.

Without giving me time to approach my prize, the Arabs sprang upon me like two madmen, and I was nearly thrown down and crushed by their transports of joy and gratitude.

came the lion's turn; and they overwhelmed him with recriminations and blows, and then from time to time fired their guns in the air to spread the glad tidings to the distant douars. After they had leaped and gambolled, and hurrahed over the animal, I was permitted to draw near him, and examine him at my ease, to look at the size of his teeth, and to measure the strength of his limbs, and place my hand on his tawny mane. I had no difficulty in recognizing him by the Arab description of *the venerable*.

To give an idea of this lion, it will suffice me to say that the united strength of us three men was not sufficient to turn him over as he lay, and that his head was so heavy that I could scarcely lift it from the earth.

With the echoes from the reports of my companions' guns, came the distant sound of musketry; now here and now there, as the signal was rung from douar to douar, around the whole base of the mountain, until at last it was a general fusillade. In about an hour, the Arabs came in on foot and horseback, hurrying forward to touch and insult a foe that had chilled their very souls while living. After great efforts, we at length were enabled to put the lion on two mules, placed side by side, and in this manner marched down the mountain. It was about midnight when we reached the douar, and made our triumphal entry by the light of huge bonfires with the sound of music and of guns, and the women chanting the war-song to the clapping of their hands. The body of the fallen king was laid out in state on a mat between two fires, and the whole population of the country marched in front of him in stately procession, that they might admire and apostrophize the mighty dead, and all night long and until the sunrise of the morrow, high revel and a royal wake was held in all the tents for the lion of El Archioua.

Early in the morning I left for Guelma, accompanied by a thousand heartfelt benedictions. The hatred of the women

had fallen with the lion, and now they were more grateful and ardent in their affection than the men, and they all desired to enrich me by gifts of cattle and herds. The proposition that was made to me by the Arabs reminded me of a custom in force in some of the departments of France, where a hunter who has killed a wolf is in the habit of marching from village to village, and the farmers and cultivators pay a tribute as he passes.

The Arabs wanted me before leaving, to visit all the douars scourged by the lion in order to receive a beef from every tent. The offer was made in perfect good faith, as they proposed to commence with themselves, and to send horse men with me to drive my herds into Guelma after the body of the lion.

I could have entered the city that evening if I had accepted their generous offer, with a thousand head of horned cattle bellowing victory. I preferred entering with my lion.

You were a rich man to refuse this gift worth a hundred thousand francs, I hear you say.

Heavens! no, I was poor as Job; but does not a payment destroy the worth of a good act? Yes, or no, I have refused the same offer a hundred times since then, and never yet regretted my decision.

Nevertheless, we marched on towards Guelma as fast as the weight of the lion, the resistance of the frightened animals that carried it, and the curiosity of the thousands of Arabs who came out to see the cortege, would permit. Already the distant walls of the city arose from the sandy plain, when I saw a horseman coming at full run, with a man behind him on the crupper. Having reached the procession, the man mounted behind slid to the earth, and I recognized the old man to whom I had promised the lion's beard, who had come to demand the honor.

The execution was had on the spot, and I was as happy in

being able to keep my word, as the old fellow seemed to be in possession of so great a treasure.

Upon our arrival in Guelma, the lion was exposed as a curiosity to the inhabitants of the city, and finally skinned, divided and eaten by my comrades.

This lion was so large as to produce a curious impression on the mind of the spectator, which my friend Valle, an officer in the regiment at Guelma at that time, who is speaking to me as I write these lines, just recalls to me.

All those who called to see the body in the place where it was deposited, when they returned to it again, found it larger and more beautiful and majestic than before, and I, who had not lost it from sight for a moment since it marched out of the woods in front of me, whenever the crowd shut it from my sight for a few moments, was equally astonished to find how it had grown.

There was another remarkable fact connected with this lion, which was one of the red species.

The body had been placed in the barrack where the spahis lodged, and it was here that it was skinned and cut in pieces, but although the doors were kept carefully closed, yet for several days the horses and mules that were accustomed to be led past this building to water, absolutely refused to come near it, and exhibited the utmost signs of terror, and the very horsemen who were coming into the city from the plain, were stopped short by this invisible "lion in the path."

A few days afterwards, I was summoned to Bone, to receive from the hands of General Randon, a rifle that was sent me as a gift by his royal highness the Duke d'Aumale, and my captain, to whom I had given the skin of the lion while he was still alive, gave me a double-barrel rifle to use in my future hunts.

On my return to Guelma, I saw that I had already become an object of interest to the eyes of the Arabs, who came all

the way from the mountains expressly to see me, and who already had commenced speaking of me as *Bou-Sioud* or *Katel-Sioud*, the Lion's Master, or the Lion Killer.

I was, however, only a novice in the art. I desired the chance to better merit the title, and that chance was not long in coming.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## AN EXCURSION IN THE MAHOUNA COUNTRY.

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MY SECOND LION.

ON the 4th of August, 1844, I received an invitation from the inhabitants of Mahouna, the lion's paradise, that I immediately accepted, and the setting sun saw me dismount at the douar that had called me.

Having found the village surrounded by immense piles of light wood arranged for the reception of the lion, that paid them nightly calls, I forbade their being lit, and immediately selected the place I intended to occupy, to waylay him that very night, in case he should come as usual to depredate on the herds.

The douar was placed upon a plateau of land overlooking the surrounding country, and was surrounded by a hedge eight feet in height. As the lion cleared this hedge sometimes from one side, and sometimes from another, and as the place was of large circumference, it was difficult to tell with any certainty from what side the attack would be made. At last, by careful searching, I found the route by which the animal usually came, and took my seat directly in his path, to the great terror of the Arabs, who said: "Don't remain there, he will walk right over you."

Seeing that I did not attend to their solicitations, they hastened to bring me mats and cushions, and in a few moments afterwards, a smoking repast was placed by the side of the couch that was to serve me for the night, and as the *ogre*, as the Arabs called their guest, would not arrive before midnight, they did me the honor of their company until the apprehension of his visit caused their retreat. This was a sort of lion soiree, where every one brought his tale more or less tragic, illustrating some of the misdeeds of the lion.

While waiting until our hero shall come upon the scene, I will give my readers one of the stories that was told that night, and that has remained in my brain while the many are long since forgotten. The written tale will lack to the reader the wild dress and gesture of the speaker, the curious circle of listening figures, with the women in the background, the white tents of the douar, and the flood of moonlight that bathed all in beauty, and lent a double interest to the young Arab's words.

Thus ran the story :

On the desert, when an Arab, the owner of a large tent, marries a wife, he bids all the world to the wedding, and the guests all go to the bride's tent to conduct her to her new home. The girl is carried in a palanquin, and the guests march by her side, making the night gay with music, and a general fusillade.

But as all men do not herd the same number of cattle, so all marriages are not alike. If one is honored by a great cortege, and gay cavaliers, rich in trappings and well-earned name, caracole by the side of the future spouse; another groom may not have the means even to pay the fiddler that makes the music.

Smail, a young warrior of our tribe, belonged to this latter class, and his last crown had been spent to endow his bride.

His retinue was confined to his near relatives, and on the auspicious day, he came on foot to the tent of his future father-in-law, like a very peasant.

Here the brave couple, and their friends, feasted on mutton and couscoussou, and when the repast was done, they fired away with powder and ball, taking care to reserve enough to use, in case of need, on their way home. They did not take the precaution to sign the marriage contract, for not one of the party could write even his own name, and the evening coming on, they separated with mutual good fellowship, and well wishes for the future.

The douar of the husband was only a league and a half away; it was a bright moonlight evening, and the party numbered nine guns—what was there to make them afraid? But is it not when the tent is the gayest, that trouble draws the curtain and steps in at the door

Truly, the good people were gay, and as they returned, in merry mood, they sang as they frolicked over the sand.

Allez-vous-en, gens de la noce,  
Allez-vous-en, chacun chez vous.

Smail walked at the head of the procession, with his dark-eyed wife, and his head was bent, and his voice was low, whispering soft promises of the pleasures that were awaiting them under his tent. His friends were behind, discreetly loitering at a little distance, and from time to time, their guns awoke the echoes among the distant hills. All went merry as a marriage-bell.

But on a sudden, the Devil, who had not been bidden to the wedding, presented himself before them, in the shape of an enormous lion, and crouched down in the very path of the procession.

What was to be done?

They were half between the two douars, and it was equally

dangerous to return as to advance. The occasion to win the devotion of his wife for ever, was too tempting to Smail, to allow it to pass. The guns were all loaded with ball, the bride was placed in the middle of a hollow square formed by the guests, brave men all, and the escort marched on, led by the bridegroom. They came to within thirty paces of the lion, and yet he had not moved.

Smail ordered the party to halt, and then, saying to his wife, "Judge if you have married a man or not," he walked straight up to the wild beast, summoning him in a loud voice to clear the road.

At twenty paces, the lion raised his monstrous head, and prepared to spring.

Smail, in spite of the cries of his wife, and the entreaties of his friends, who counselled a retreat, bent one knee to the earth, took aim, and fired.

The lion, wounded by the shot, sprang on the husband, hurled him to the earth, and tore him in pieces in the twinkling of an eye, and then charged the group, in the middle of which stood the bride.

"Let no one fire," shouted the father of Smail, until he is within gun's length."

But where is the man who is strong enough at heart to await, with a firm foot and steady hand, this thunderbolt of hell that is called a lion, when, with flowing mane, blazing eye, and open mouth, he charges on him with immense bounds? All fired at once, without regarding whither their balls went, and the lion fell on the group, dashing them hither and thither, breaking the bones and tearing the flesh of all he found within his reach.

Nevertheless, some escaped, carrying with them the bride half dead with terror. In a moment more, and the lion was after them: there was no refuge and no defence, and the wounded beast seized and tore to pieces one after the other,

until but one was left of all the party. He, more fortunate than the others, reached the foot of a steep rock on which he placed the woman, and then began climbing up after her. He had already reached twice the height of a horseman, when the lion gained the foot of the rock as furious as ever. With a single bound he seized the unfortunate man by the leg, and dragged him backwards to the ground, while the woman reached the summit of the rock from whose inaccessible height she watched the horrible spectacle—the death agony of the last of her defenders. After one or two unsuccessful bounds, the lion returned to the dead body of his last victim, and commenced mangling and tearing it in small pieces, in revenge for the loss of the poor wife that looked down at him from above.

The rest of the night passed slowly away to the lonely woman. When the morning dawned, the lion retired to the mountain, but he departed reluctantly, and not without stopping and returning more than once with a covetous whine, for the cowering bride he left behind him. A few moments after he had gone, a group of cavaliers appeared on the plain. The widow of Smail without any voice to call, waved her bridal veil as a signal of distress. They came to her at a gallop, and carried her to her father's tent, where she died the next night at the hour of the wedding.

That was the Arab's story; but I will omit the exclamations, taunts, and reproaches, that were hurled at the murderer after it was finished. One after the other, they told their different tales, and it was not until late that the party broke up, the Arabs to return to their tents with many God's blessings for my success, and I to remain on the watch, with a native corporal of the spahis, named Saadi-bou-Nar, whose brother was Sheik of this country.

My comrade was armed with a government carbine, and I with the double-barrel rifle given to me by Captain Durand.

The path on which we were lying, ascended the steep hill side, from a densely-wooded ravine, where the lion kept himself by day, to the high plateau on which the douar was placed. If he should follow his accustomed path, coming up from the ravine, I would be able to have my shot at him from above; if on the contrary he should gain the douar by some other route, I would be beneath him. In this uncertainty I took my position so that I could see through the cork wood trees either above or below me, and would have a free sight in either direction for about thirty paces.

At about one o'clock in the morning, Saadi-bou-Nar, but little accustomed to these night watches, plead guilty to being very sleepy, and stretched himself out behind me, where, to do him justice, he slept most soundly. I know a great many men who, in spite of their greater pretensions to bravery, would not have done as much in such a place, at such a time as this. I had taken the precaution to have all the dogs tied up under the tents so as to quiet their customary clamor, and now in the midst of the dead silence around me, I could detect the faintest noise or motion. Up to this time the heavens had been serene, and the moon clear, but soon clouds gathered in the west and came scudding past before a warm sultry wind a little later, the sky was all overcast, the moon was gone, and the thunder rolled around us in heavy peals, announcing a coming tempest. Then the rain fell in torrents, and drenching my companions they awoke, and we consulted for a moment about returning to the douar. But while we were talking, an Arab called from the camp, "Beware, the lion will come with the storm!"

It is needless to say that this decided me to remain at my post, and I covered the locks of my gun with the skirts of my coat, while Saadi-bou-Nar draped himself in his burnous with the heroic resignation of a beaver. Soon the rain ceased, like all rains that accompany a thunder gust, and we only saw its

passage by the lightning that tracked the distant horizon, and the moon, more brilliant than ever, came in and out from the fleecy clouds over our heads. I took advantage of every one of these short instants of clear sky to survey the country about me, and to sound each clump of trees or fallen log, and it was in one of these brief moments that all of a sudden I thought I saw the lion. I waited breathless till the moon came out again. Yes, by Jove! it was he, standing motionless only a few paces from the douar.

Accustomed to see fires lighted at every tent, to hear a hundred dogs barking in terror, and to see the men of the douar hurling lighted brands at him, he, without doubt, was at a loss to explain the rather suspicious silence that reigned around him.

While I was turning slowly around in order to take better aim, without being seen by the animal, a cloud shut out the moon. I was seated with my left elbow on my knee, my rifle at my shoulder, watching by turns the lion that I only recognized as a confused mass, and the passing cloud, whose length I anxiously regarded.

At last the scud passed, and the moonlight, dearer to me than the most beautiful sunshine, illuminated the picture, and again showed me the lion still standing in the same place.

I saw him the better as he was so much raised above me, and he loomed up proudly magnificent, standing as he was in majestic repose, with his head high in air, and his flowing mane undulating in the wind, and falling to his knees. It was a black lion of noble form and the largest size. As he presented his side to me, I aimed just behind his shoulder, and fired.

I heard a fierce roar of mingled pain and rage echoing up the hills with the report of my gun, and then from under the smoke, I saw the lion bounding upon me.

Saadi-bou-Nar, roused the second time that night from his slumbers, sprang to his gun, and was about to fire over my shoulder. With a motion of my arm I pushed aside the barrel of his gun, and when the beast, still roaring furiously, was within three steps of me, I fired my second barrel directly in his breast.

Before I could seize my companion's gun, the lion rolled at my feet, bathing them in the blood that leaped in torrents from his throat.

He had fallen dead so near me, that I could have touched him from where I stood.

At the first moment, I thought I was dreaming, and that it was impossible that the huge bulk that lay motionless before me, was the same animal that, endowed with super-human strength, and vomiting peals of thunder, was just before leaping through the air. But the cries of Saadi-bou-Nar calling the Arabs of the douar, proved to me that it was no dream. I cannot explain the reason, but the death of the lion did not give me the same pleasure as that of my first victim, but how could it be otherwise?

In looking for my balls, I found the first one, the one that had not killed, just behind the shoulder where I had intended it to hit, and the second, that had been fired in haste, and almost at hazard, had been the one that was mortal. From this moment I learned that it does not suffice to aim correctly to kill a lion, and that it is a feat infinitely more serious than I had at first supposed.

But slowly my pre-occupation became dissipated, and little by little, as I contemplated the lordly grace of my victim crouched at my feet in death, and heard the reports of musketry carrying the fame of my victory from camp to camp, I became less thoughtful, and drank with pleasure the intoxicating cup of success.

Nevertheless, I wondered at the lethargy of the Arabs,

who had not yet come out from their douar, but Saadi-bou-Nar explained this apparent indifference, by saying that they were afraid the lion was not yet dead.

It took about half an hour for them to decide to come outside of the hedge to bring me a vase of water I had called for, and when three of the boldest had decided upon risking the attempt, the following was the order of procession of this prudent triumvirate, bound on their hazardous mission

First, an Arab walking slowly with the step of a cat, and looking now on one side, and now on another, with his gun to his shoulder, ready to fire at anything that moved.

Second, the water carrier with his flagon of water in one hand, and the other holding on to the skirts of his leader's burnous, stopping when he stopped, and advancing when he advanced.

Third, the rear guard holding the burnous of his predecessor in one hand, and brandishing a yataghan in the other.

This was the order of march until they arrived within sight of the lion, and then they called a halt, and Saadi-bou-Nar was obliged to strike the body with his hand, before they would altogether venture into the presence of his late majesty.

*Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coute*, it is said, and the result justified the motto, for in five minutes the people of the douar, who had doubtless been watching the process, made a rush for the spot, and men, women, dogs and children came hurrying out to kiss the hand of the victor they formerly despised, and insult the fallen greatness, that had ever made them tremble in their very tents.

Before sunrise, the Arabs were coming in from every side, with their families. I received that day hundreds of visitors, carefully observing their gestures, and treasuring their words, to guide me in my future intercourse with the people. At

one time an entire village arrived at once from the side of the ravine. One man on horseback marched at the head of the column as leader, the rest followed, leading their mules carrying their women and children.

I saw one mule loaded with five women, all astride, one behind the other. The cavalier that led the troop, came on boldly to within thirty paces of the lion, when his horse, catching the scent, suddenly plunged so violently, that he came near rolling the whole harem down the hill. The rider and his wives dismounted, and the men came within ten paces of the lion, while the women clustered behind, impressed with the undefined terror that affected them all.

It was a spectacle at once curious and instructive, to see these men halting at a respectful distance before this animal, that had been their scourge for a lifetime, and was now motionless clay. They took their seats on the ground, cross legged, and in silence, with their women behind them, each party grouping itself together around its chief. For a long time not a word was said, their eyes only were eloquent, as they moved from the lion to the hunter, and back again to the lion.

There were men of all ages and conditions among this multitude, and there was depicted on their countenances such a melange of astonishment and fear, of admiration and respect, that I was more touched by their mute homage, than with the more noisy enthusiasm of the people of El-Archioua. I had not left the spot since the night, and it was on the very field of battle that each family advanced in turn to offer me its congratulations and thanks.

The men, with stately grace, kissed the hem of my burnous, or my rifle that lay at my side, saying, "May God strengthen your arm, and bless you."

The women kissed my hand, saying, "God bless the mother

that bore you," or "May God make your wife fruitful and happy."

While the men were examining the lion, the women gathered around me, and asked a hundred questions at once, about my country, my mother, and family. There were more than fifty crowding around me, the same women, who a month before would have fled from me as from a noxious beast, whose very appearance was repulsive. Now they talked, and wondered, and chatted with a mixture of familiarity and respect, that they would not have shown even to one of their own countrymen.

The mothers lifted up their children in their arms, that they might touch me and kiss me, saying, "Don't be afraid, he only harms the lion, he is our friend and our brother.

While the young girls, more timid at my presence, were whispering among themselves, their mothers never ceased asking me questions, principally about my mother. They never thought, dear souls, of all their demands and praises, there was but one that touched my heart, and flattered me to tears.

There were there around me beautiful faces, that were rarely seen unveiled, above all, to my countrymen. There were there hundreds of brave men, warriors all, crowding around, and one after the other lauding my deeds with honest praise, that would have exalted more modest souls than mine. Yet with all that, I can say it with all sincerity, there were no voices so sweet as those that named my mother's name, that asked me her age, and when I had left her, if I ever heard from her now when far away; if I wanted to see her, and if she was ever coming in their country, and that terminated their questions by invoking a thousand blessings on her honored head.

The death of the lion had truly been a blessing, since it summoned up to my mind such pleasant remembrances of a

far-away home, and her I loved so dearly. No sweeter praise could have been bestowed on the stranger—no greater triumph could have been won from the hostile tribes.

The women desired, and I could not refuse their request, some locks from the lion's mane, and to wear his heart, which they wanted to divide among their boys, who would, after eating it, become brave as the lion himself.

At noon the lion made his triumphal entry into Guelma, and suffered the extreme penalty of the law: that is, he who had devoured so many victims, was hung, drawn, and quartered, and his flesh divided among the different cantonments of soldiers, served that night on many a merry board, when the soldier forgot his fatigues with song and wine, and talked of hunts and razzias, and fought old battles o'er again.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE LION OF KROU-NÉGA.

ON my return to Guelma, my first care was to break the fever that had driven me from the field. But this was a difficult task, for the disease followed my path like a bloodhound on a scent, until at last, towards the end of the month of February, 1844, I concluded to go to Bone for a change of air.

The first news that I heard after reaching this place, was that my old friend, the black lion, was sacrificing a hecatomb of beef for his weekly supplies, most of it taken from a farm near the mosque of Sidi-Dendon. Although I was still unwell, I sent for my arms that I had left at Guelma, and started out from Bone with two rifles, intending to renew his acquaintance. The first night I spent at the farm, and the evening following, I dismounted at the douars of the Ouled-Bou-Aziz, opposite the mountain of Krou-Néga. The lion, after a long jaunt he had taken a short time before, when I had trotted after him like a jackal, had returned to his old haunts on the hill. The Arabs informed me that every evening the douars were thrown into consternation by his attacks, which occurred very early in the evening, and consequently, I immediately loaded my guns in anticipation of his coming. At the moment I was putting the caps on the tubes, the lion sounded his first roar.

Being little acquainted with the country, I requested a guide to come with me, and show me the fords and mountain-paths,

and Ahmed-Ben-Ali having offered his services, we immediately set out together. Soon the light of the sunset disappeared, and the night became so dark that I could not even see my guide, who was walking two paces ahead of me.

Having reached a secluded brook all covered with trees, and embowered here and there with trellised vines that festooned the water-oaks that grew by its side, he said to me: This is the fording-place the lion usually crosses, and he will be here in about an hour, more or less; but if you have any confidence in me, I would advise you to return to the douar until the rising of the moon, and then we will come to watch for him when he comes back again, after he has made his expedition, or we can hunt him up to-morrow at daylight.

The forty nights I had spent so unsuccessfully in the open air, were still a sore point with me, and I would not let pass so fair a chance for revenge, so I told my guide that he might return to the camp if he desired it, but that I would remain. Seeing that he had no fancy for going alone, I pointed out to him a thicket a little way behind me, with a very heavy foliage, telling him that he might hide himself there as best he could, which he immediately did, keeping himself as close as a rabbit.

After having examined the ground I was occupying, partly by my eyes and partly by hand, I sat down on a stone that overlooked the steep sides of the ford, bracing my feet on a root that curved out of the bank.

Having shut my eyes for some minutes, I was enabled to see, on opening them, that the bank on which I was sitting fell off perpendicularly, caused by the earth having been cut away by the overflow of the brook, and that the ford was a couple of yards below me; and by the occasional flashes of foam, I could feel rather than see, the water hurrying down over the rocky bed of the river.

I had just made these observations, and decided upon firing

upon my foe while he should still be in the water, trusting to the height of the bank to save me from his first attack, when from the other side of the brook, and a half mile up the hill, I heard the heavy moaning that precedes the lion's roar, and then his full-toned voice belched forth its detonations until the black night was tremulous with the sound.

When the roar ceased, I took my position to fire, and allowing time enough for him to come from the spot where I had last heard him roar, I awaited his coming with my elbow on my knee and my gun at my shoulder. Minute after minute stole away, and the time began to appear long, with nothing but the sense of hearing to inform me of the approach of the foe.

Suddenly, from the other bank of the brook, and directly opposite to where I was sitting, came a deep guttural sigh, ending in a long moan, that sounded like the death-rattle in a man's throat. I had never heard such a sound before. I looked in that direction, and saw fastened on me, like two burning coals, the eyes of the lion. The fixed stare of his look, which seemed to cast a dim effulgence without showing anything around, not even the head of the beast, sent all the blood in my veins back to my heart. One minute before I was trembling with cold, now the perspiration stood on my forehead in large drops.

The desolate place and dim presence moved me in spite of myself, and I was more affected by my utter helplessness than by the fierce spirit of my foe, for all the while it seemed as if the lion said, *I see you there*, and all the while *I* could see nothing but the impalpable night and the intangible phosphorescence of his gaze. But this supernatural dread vanished like the phantoms of sleep, and when the eyes disappeared, and I heard the lion walk down towards the brook. The prospect of action brought me back to life, and I became perfectly impassible, no matter what might happen.

A pause, and I heard the lion<sup>\*</sup> in the water, which splashed

under his regular tread. He marched with assurance towards my side of the ford, but it was not until he was five or six paces from me that I again caught sight of his glowing eyes. I had several times taken aim to try if I could distinguish the sight on my gun, but I could not even see the barrels; nevertheless, the lion's eyes suddenly appeared again, fixed and burning, and riveted my regard with their spectral intensity. I tried to judge of the direction of his body by their position, and with my eyes wide open and my head erect, I took my aim, and pressed the trigger.

The flash of fire that followed brought out every feature of the scene with the utmost distinctness. For an instant I saw the huge animal in the water, the surrounding trees, the deep ravine, and then again nought but utter darkness, that rung to a savage roar of mingled pain and rage. The lion was wounded.

Having withdrawn my feet from the root that overhung the bank of the brook, I stood on the defensive. I could have fired my second barrel in the same way I had fired the first, but I resolved at all hazards to retain it in case of need. For a few moments I could hear the lion struggling and splashing in the water below me, and then I could hear nothing at all but the swirl of the brook.

I listened for some time, but in vain. Presently the Arab came out of his concealment, where he had listened to the whole of the performance, and said that the lion must be either dead or crippled to judge by his roaring. Not being willing to explore that region of shadows in company with such game, we returned to the douar to wait for daylight, that never seemed so long in coming.

The first thing I saw in the morning, after reaching the spot of my evening adventure, was the root on which I had braced my feet, cut in two by the teeth of the lion, and all

the bank beneath furrowed by his claws. Beneath, by the edge of the brook, Ahmed-Ben-Ali picked up a piece of bone the size of his finger. The bone, together with the mark of a single front paw, when the animal had bounded against the side of the bank, made me conclude that he had his shoulder broken. As he had followed the course of the stream, probably to soothe his wound in the water, it was impossible for us to find any traces of him, although we spent the whole day in the attempt.

On the next day a great number of the Arabs came together to aid me in the hunt; and we beat through all the woods in the neighborhood without any success. I then gave up the lion as dead, and was making my arrangements to return to Bone, when I heard loud cries together with the reports of guns from the side of the mountain. I mounted my horse and rode in the direction of the sound as fast as possible.

When I reached the place I saw the body of the Arabs at a goodly distance off on the other side of the brook, but there were about a dozen that had approached the wounded animal as they said, to finish him, and had turned tail and were fleeing like mad, while the lion was charging close after them. Over rocks and mastic bushes they came, helter skelter, Sheik and servant together, their horses so wild with fright, that there was no checking them, and they did not halt until they had placed a long distance between themselves and their pursuer, who would have made short work of the whole party had he not been dragging after him a broken leg.

The animal came to a halt in a small opening, growling with a menacing mien. How grand and beautiful he was, standing there on one side of the brook, with his regal carriage, his bristling mane, and lashing tail, while sixty armed horsemen stood trembling on the other.

I dismounted from my horse, and giving him in charge to

an Arab, started forward, when a number of the hunters ran up to me to prevent me, urging all the reasons they could suggest, and actually detaining me by force, until I was obliged to leave my burnous in their hands to get away. As I ran towards the lion they followed, but one by one dropped off as I advanced, until only one of the party remained by my side. It was my guide of the evening before, who said as he hurried along :

“I have received thee under my tent, and am responsible for thee before God and man, and am ready to die with thee if needs be.”

In the mean while the lion had left the open spot for a thicket a few paces off. I carefully followed his foot-prints halting whenever they passed through bushes, and casting stones in to drive him out, or make him give some sign of his presence.

Presently a stone thrown at random was answered by a sullen growl, and the animal dashed out wild with pain and rage, and carrying his wounded leg with the toes turned inward, which gave him the appearance of a bird-dog on a point.

As soon as I saw him I kneeled, the Arab squatting behind me and calling out to me, “fire, now! do fire!” and then uttering fervent ejaculations to the prophet.

The lion made a short bound of four or five paces, which was to be followed by another, when my first ball struck him in the forehead near the eye and he fell to the earth. Ahmed was already murmuring his untimely thanksgiving, when the lion reared himself on his hind legs like a horse. He was only five paces off; Ahmed hushed his chant in an instant to resume his prayers, and my second ball struck the animal in the breast and penetrating his heart, he fell over dead.

My first ball had broken his shoulder, my second had been flattened on the frontal bone without doing it any injury, and

only the third had been mortal, although they had all been fired at about five paces. I learned from this result, that my projectiles had not sufficient penetration, and after that day I used the iron ball, instead of the leaden.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE LION A MESMERIZER.

It was early in the pleasant month of June, that the people of Mahouna sent me a messenger, praying me to come and pass judgment on certain criminals of the leonine tribe, that had been acting the part of great sinners towards them, and were still at large and unpunished. This was, however, not so much owing to their not deserving the penalty of the law, as to a certain timidity that universally prevails on the part of the lawgivers towards these powerful freebooters.

I accordingly put myself under the guidance of the mahogany colored mercury that brought the message, and after a few hours of reckless riding over the undulating plain, I threw myself down on the mats of the hospitable douars of his tribe. The evening had already cooled the day, and old and young gathered around the ruddy fire to tell of old adventures, or speculate on the chances of the morrow. Legend and tale followed each other in rapid course, and apt quotations from the Koran, proved the truth of facts that might otherwise have been met with incredulity.

From all these sources I learned the following habits of my favorite animal, that I give the more readily as they are confirmed by my after experience.

The lion treats a man very differently from any animal that he is accustomed to kill for food. If he kills a person who

has fired at him he never eats the body. If he meets in his nightly promenade a man well clothed in burnous, his experience shows him that he is not a marauder, and he may either kill him for food, or if the fancy happens to take him, he will kill him by fear, little by little, just as a pastime.

In the first case he will give him barely time enough to say his prayers, and then bounding on him will crush his head with a single bite, instead of strangling him as he is accustomed to do with other animals.

In the second case, he sometimes will bar the passage of the unfortunate fellow by lying down before him, and then he will walk along by his side, purring and showing his teeth like a tiger. Sometimes he makes believe to go away and leave him alone, and then making a long detour he will conceal himself along the path, and charge at him with a roar. Sometimes he crouches down like a cat and bounds on his victim, who gives himself up for lost, but the tantalizer only knocks him over with his paw, or walking around him strikes him in the face with a blow like a flail from his muscular tail.

At last the victim succumbs to the agony that is greater than a thousand deaths, and dies of very fear.

These pastimes of the lion, that as one can well imagine have never been told by the victim himself, are reported by his comrades who, having been in company sought safety in flight, by taking refuge on rocks or trees, while the poor soul that was captured, too much frightened to imitate their example, died before their eyes of terror while they could do nothing for his relief but pray to the prophet, who only heard when it was too late to save.

These attacks, so horrible in their fascination, have given a certain semblance of proof to the universally accredited belief in the magnetizing power of the lion. Whether it may be



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PAGE 291.



true or not, the following story which I heard at the douar, will not be amiss.

Once upon a time, and that time about thirty years ago, a young man of the tribe of Amemera, which tribe holds the lands that lie by the foot of Mount Aures, loved and was beloved by a beautiful girl. He applied to the father of the maiden for the hand of his daughter, but the old man, more thoughtful for flocks and herds than youthful sentiments, refused a groom who could scarcely endow his bride with a goat.

Yet still the love was not diminished, though the heavens did not smile, and one fine night the lady's tent was empty, and she on the open plain with her arm on her lover's shoulder, was seeking a dearer home.

Seghir, her intended, was armed as an Arab should be, with steel and gun, and though the distance from douar to douar was long, yet still the feet of love are swift, and the tents of Seghir's tribe already shone white in the starlight before them, and Seghir's hounds could be heard baying hoarse welcome to their approach—when suddenly a lion sprang up in the path before them.

The girl shrieked so loud in her terror, that the men in the camp heard her cries, and came rushing to her succor. When they reached the place guided by the voice, they saw the lion walking slowly towards the woods, with his eyes fastened on Seghir, who was following him.

The young girl tried hard to draw her lover back, but he held her hand and pulled her along in spite of her resistance, saying :

“Come, dearest, our seignior calls us !”

“No ! No ! Your arms, Seghir, are they useless to save me ?”

“My arms, I have none,” answered the fascinated man ;  
“don't listen to her, my seignior, she does not speak the

truth, I have no arms, and will follow you wherever you will."

The Arabs who had come to the rescue of the lovers numbered about ten, and seeing that the couple were about to be drawn into the woods, they all took aim together at the lion and fired, when perceiving that the animal did not fall, they all ran away together towards the tents. The lion instantly bounded on Seghir, and crushed his head with one crunch of his jaws, and then laid himself down by the side of the young girl, putting his paws on her knees.

The Arabs, emboldened by seeing that they were not pursued, after they had re-charged their guns, returned to the attack. Fearing for the young girl, they tried to get the lion away from her before firing at him, which they succeeded in doing, but when they lowered their guns to take aim, before they could pull their triggers, the animal bounded on them, and seized one with his teeth, and one with each of his front paws, and then drawing them together in a heap, he lay down on the writhing bodies and commenced slowly to tear them in pieces, and crunch their heads as he had done that of Seghir.

Those that escaped, fled to the douar where they told what had happened, and the lion picked up the girl and carried her into the woods, while the men in the douar could hear her screams imploring them for help, but did not dare to go to her assistance.

On the next day, all the men of the tribe went out to gather the bodies of their friends, but nothing was to be found of the young girl, except her white garment that lay in the woods tangled in her long tresses of hair. Her ravisher had eaten the rest.

Is it true that the lion can so influence certain feeble minds as to cause them to follow him? The Arabs firmly believe it, and will cite hundreds of examples

As for myself, I can freely say that when I have found myself in the presence of this monarch, I never felt the least desire to join his company, or to say with the poet :

*Oui, de ta suite, ô roi, de ta suite, j'en suis.*

Though I can easily understand how the fixed gaze of the lion, together with his majestic bearing and imposing front may so awe a man who suddenly comes into his presence, that he may be rendered totally powerless of escape.

On the next night, about the middle of the night, while on the hunt, I met a young lion, which seeing me coming to him lay down in the path to await my approach.

The moon was shining brightly, and I walked to within fifteen paces of him while he still remained perfectly motionless. I judged by his tactics that it was safest not to come to any closer quarters, and so putting one knee to the ground, I aimed just behind the shoulder, and fired.

I don't know precisely how it happened, but before I saw or knew anything more, I found myself down on my back, and the lion standing over me, and my arm lying against his front leg. Most fortunately for me, I wore a heavy turban, the folds of which preserved my head. As quickly as I could I slipped my head out of my turban, which the lion was tearing in pieces, and crawling from under my burnous which I also left in his grasp, I found myself once more free.

I immediately took advantage of my liberty to drive a bullet through the brain of the young fool, who still continued tearing to pieces my burnous and turban.

Upon examining the body of my young acquaintance, I traced the first ball that had entered at one side and gone out the other just behind the shoulder. The second ball had made its entrance in one ear, and its exit by the other. This was the fourth lion I had killed in Algeria.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## AN ACCOUNT OF TWO LIONS THAT "WOULD NOT DOWN."

IN the month of August, of the same year, I again visited the Mahouna country.

While I was sitting at dinner, in the tent of Ahmeh-ben-Amar, the sheik of the Ouled Amzah, at about eight o'clock in the evening, we heard a lioness roar not far from the douar. In a quarter of an hour we met face to face, within twelve paces of each other; I immediately fired, and she fell with the report of my gun.

I waited an instant, and not seeing her move, I threw a stone at her, which struck her body and bounced off. This producing no effect, I walked up to her, and found the mark of my ball that had entered at her temple, but had not gone through the head. Not seeing any of the Arabs approaching, I walked back to a little eminence, from whence I could see the tents of the douar, and called to the Arabs to bring a mule to carry home the lioness.

The men came running after me in haste to see the animal, asking me where she lay, I pointed out to them the spot, and they ran on. When I came up to them they said they could not find her, and on my coming after them a moment later, to my inexpressible astonishment and mortification, the lioness was nowhere to be seen. Yet it could not be a dream. My hands were all red, and I found the soil at the place where she had been lying soaking wet with her blood. It was

there I had seen her fall, and even laid my hand upon her. I passed a large portion of the night hunting for her in the neighborhood, but without any result, and retired to my tent with the intention of following her track by daylight. But in the night, a sudden storm arose, and when morning came every track in the desert was obliterated.

A few days afterwards the body of the lioness was found at a league from the douar. This long walk after such a wound, may give the reader some idea of the vitality of this animal.

In the month of September, 1845, the men of the tribe Meizia, sent me a messenger with a petition, praying that I would come and deliver them from the presence of an old black lion that was destroying them without any pity.

After lying in wait for three nights outside of the douar, for which he seemed to have the greatest preference, and never being able to see his lordship, I commenced to examine the forest. The result of this inspection was the discovery, that when he came down or went up the mountain, he always followed one path. The next night I profited by my information, by posting myself in the path which ran through a ravine, called by the natives, the Lion's Garden, making use of a large rock as a partial shelter, and as a rest for my gun.

About eleven o'clock, I thought I detected a distant step. In a moment more, I heard a regular tread; it was he, there was no mistaking it, the lion was coming.

This country is so wooded and broken, that I could not see the animal, but as he approached me he roared, and there was something in the sound of his voice that immediately told me he suspected my presence. When I first caught sight of him, he was within ten paces of me, and had halted with his face towards me, growling with a heavy harsh sound, and looking at me with a very wicked eye.

I was all ready for his coming, and the moon was shining brightly from between the trees, so that we had scarcely laid eyes on each other, before a ball struck him directly in the forehead. With the explosion of my gun the lion sprang at me with a roar, I felt a sudden shock at my shoulder, his breast struck the stone that was before me, and before I could fire my second barrel, or do anything to save myself, I was hurled to the ground. The next instant I found myself lying on my side, with my legs pinned fast by the rock that had rolled on me, while the lion, stunned by the blow he had received, was lying at my side, but so near that I could not use my gun.

I seized my poniard, that lay under my hand, having been placed there beforehand, according to custom, and struck the animal a heavy blow in the temple.

He immediately rose to his feet, and without seeing me, walked over my body, reeling like a drunken man, and took refuge in the wood, carrying with him two inches of the blade of my dagger.

Thus I escaped with a few bruises, from an encounter that I should think was the most dangerous that I had ever experienced, and I can verily say, that my escape was most providential, and an event I little expected when I first found myself lying side by side with the monstrous brute.

In fact, if the lion had not been so stunned by the concussion of my ball, which had struck him in the middle of his forehead, or if I had not been preserved from his first charge, by the stone that covered my body, or had he not, after I struck him with my poniard, lost all his wits, so as to have no idea whatever of my presence, I would, most certainly, in either event, have been torn to pieces, without a moment for thought.

This lion was one of the finest that I had ever had a chance of shooting. The only reason why his skin never

hung before my tent as a trophy, was that I had forgotten my iron pointed bullets, and had only been able to send him a leaden token of my regard, which the result proved, was not a sufficient consideration for so great a person. I knew he could not survive, but I still had the regret, that I had not been able to obtain the body of a lion that had brought me so near death's door.

All Europeans whom I have ever heard speaking of encounters of this kind, seem to think that the only thing necessary to be done to succeed, is to be skillful, courageous and cool. To hear them argue, one would think that it was only a question of practice, as though every lion did not teach you the contrary by the difference of his attacks, and the circumstances attending it. There is hardly a French officer of the African army that does not think in this wise. One must be sure of himself, and then he is sure of the lion; such is their constant reasoning. To be sure of one's self then, as they express it, means the patience of waiting for a lion that is seen or heard approaching, the courage of walking up to him when he does not come fast enough, and the coolness and skill of aiming quietly and hitting him when you aim.

But when one has done all that, and when he has besides sufficient control over himself to say, I will go and sit down on this stone or that root, and I will either kill or be killed without taking a step in retreat, or without even raising from my seat when the lion shall charge; when one has done all that and yet discovers that eight times in ten, he can only kill with the second and third shot, then he is convinced, in spite of himself, that courage, and address, and impassibility are only accessories to the result, and that safety in these wild and unequal combats is accorded only to those who are fortunate.

I had, even at this period of my life, begun to rely on myself only for these two things; to find the lion and to

attack him openly. Every battle I commenced I was filled with two very opposite feelings, doubt and confidence—doubt as to the effect produced by my shot, and confidence as to the protection that the Great God throws over all His creatures.

For a long time I thought of a comparison that would convey to the mind the unequal antagonism that is waged between a man and a lion; the one armed with the best rifle that can be made, and the other with his teeth and claws, and that vital power that renders him so terrible to those that attack him.

I never found a better comparison than this.

Suppose a duel to the knife should take place, without witnesses, in the night, and in the open forest, between two bitter foes, the one clothed in the lightest fighting costume, the other armed *cap à pie*, with hauberk and greave, and yet in spite of his heavy armor, perfectly free in all his movements like the other. Place a sword in the hand of each gladiator, and say to the first that perhaps he will not be killed if he can touch with his sword two little points that are just discernible between his enemy's armor, and unprotected. Suppose an equal amount of courage and coolness with each combatant, and then, if the man in armor is killed, will you not agree with me that the other was lucky?

Let this battle be renewed over and over again in other places, and at other times, yet always under the same unequal terms, the same defenceless champion always coming forth from the valley of the shadow of death as the victor, and then you will agree with me that it was not his strength that gave the victory, but the strong right Arm which all invisibly protected and guided him.

I think I can hear you say with suspicious tone, "How then do the Arabs ever kill the lion?"

The Arabs catch the lions in pits, or while they themselves

are perched in trees or hid behind forts ; and when once in a great while they take vengeance on one, face to face, like honest foes, they have many of their bravest men torn to pieces before their eyes, and do not even then always remain masters of the field. If any one wants to prove this with his own eyes, he has only to come here with my book in his hand as a guide, and he will find the wounded heroes of Beni-Meloui, the Ouled-Cessi, and the Chegatmas, who will "fight their battles o'er again," pointing to the wounds they carry, in proof of their valor, and may offer to give him a lesson in the field, even though their hearts be feeble and their hands weak.

But let us leave this dissertation, and come back to the more interesting facts of actual life.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## A LION KILLED ON HIS OWN HEARTHSTONE.

AFTER the encounter I have just narrated, I remained in the Mahouna country quietly waiting for something to bring me into action, and holding a levee every morning under my tent, to hear the reports of the Arabs who were exploring the country. Finally not receiving any further news of lions, I returned to Guelma towards the end of September.

A long repose of two months followed, when I was again called into the field by the mountaineers.

On reaching the high plateaux, I found about a foot of snow on all the hills, with the thermometer below zero, and a miserably cold air. Nevertheless, in spite of the blanket of white that covered the land, and the icy wind that glazed the trees, which is not a supportable thing to this kind of animal, if we can believe the naturalists, a lioness had taken up her home on the hills.

I found her customary path, and watched for her arrival in the evening, having first agreed with the Arabs, that if she came to attack the douar during my absence, they should light a fire to give me notice. At about ten o'clock, I heard the dogs making a great noise, and in a little while I saw the agreed signal, and left my station to return to the village.

I arrived only in time to hear the lamentations of an old woman from whom the lioness had taken the only sheep she possessed in the world. She cried like a lunatic, poor old

soul! But I couldn't help laughing to myself as I heard her amid her sobs soundly rate her son for his cowardice. The hopeful boy was a great booby about forty years of age, and the old woman said to him, speaking of me,

"Law me, that's what I call a man. Happy the girl that has him for a husband, she will have a man to protect her."

Then she added seriously, "Oh! if I could grow young again I would marry him, Christian, though he is."

I told the old lady, that on the next day she should eat some of the lioness's flesh, and that would make her young again.

"Ah, but I can eat her flesh with a good appetite, heartless wretch that she is, to go and eat up my poor little lamb."

I here left the affectionate parent, and went to the fire to thaw out my half-frozen limbs.

Early the next morning, when I was getting ready to leave the camp, my inamorata of the previous evening presented herself at my tent, bringing me some cakes made after her own fashion, and her warmest prayers for my success. I left the douar with several Arabs, following the tracks the lioness had made when carrying away the stolen sheep. Her course lay along a path that ran parallel with the one I had been watching, and I could see in the snow that she had walked at an easy pace, stopping from time to time, to rub off the snow that clogged her feet. At about a mile and a half from the douar we came to the place where she had dined. There was nothing remaining of the old lady's sheep but its skin, which had been neatly pulled off, and was rolled up and cast aside with the extremities of the four legs. From here the trail ran on for about a pistol-shot, and then went into the woods. Here the Arabs came to the conclusion, that it would be safest for them to wait and kindle a fire, not intending in the least to hinder me, in case I desired to carry my researches any further. Rather pleased than otherwise

to be free from their company, I continued on the trail alone, and followed it into the woods being armed with my double barrel rifle and a poniard.

As I advanced into the woods, the walking became more difficult, and the close vault of trees overhead more compact, and every minute I was obliged to stop to unfasten my burnous that had caught in the bushes, until finally I took it off altogether and left it behind. At about a half mile from the edge of the woods, I saw what I thought was the lion's cover. It consisted of a dense thicket of olive trees, about a hundred yards in circumference, and so closely packed that it formed a perfect roof; snow laden above, but dry beneath, and warm with the soft siftings of the many foliaged trees, a goodly chamber for the forest queen. The place seemed to breathe the very odor of sanctity, and I could see here and there the marks of her majesty's feet, or more sacred still to plebeian eyes, the very impress of her person as she had lain here and there where fancy led her.

Knowing how soundly the lion sleeps after he has well eaten, I hoped to be able reach her while still in dreamland, and awaken her only by the ringing of my rifle. So I advanced slowly, step by step, with my body bent, and my eye following the tracks or scanning the thicket around me. Sometimes a thorn would catch my shirt and hold me back, sometimes a vine had fastened its strong tendril across my path, and I would have to stop to free myself with the greatest caution, or on hands and knees glide under the obstruction.

Finally, I came to a halt before an olive tree closer than any of the others, under whose low sweeping branches the lioness had glided, crouching like myself. In vain I tried to see behind these branches; they formed an impenetrable veil that shut out all eyes from my lady's bower. I was certain she must be here, it was directly in the middle of the grove

which was not a large one, and as I had been all around it I was sure that she had not passed out after entering it.

As the conviction forced itself on my mind, my heart beat so full with emotion, that I was obliged to keep quiet for a moment or two that my blood might flow on its accustomed course.

When I became perfectly collected again, I carefully pushed aside the branches that impeded my view with the end of my gun. I was right—there lay the lioness only five steps from me, stretched on her side, with her head pillowed on one paw, dreaming in perfect quiet, with the soft respiration of a girl in her slumbers.

I made ready to fire, but when my gun was at my shoulder, and my eye ran along the barrel, I found myself in a most perplexing situation.

The lion was lying in such a manner that I could see the whole of her form, and yet being obliged to fire while kneeling, I feared lest the horizontal position of her body should injure my shot.

In a dangerous position, haste or delay are equally bad; but inspiration came to my mind to free me from my troubles, and I adopted a bold course. Rather than send a doubtful ball into the jaws of the animal, or into the uncertain region of the heart, I resolved to awaken the lioness, and only shoot her when she should raise herself up. In order, therefore, that her awakening might be calm and natural, I proceeded with the greatest caution. While my left hand held my gun to my shoulder, with the right I broke a little twig at my side.

The lioness slept on. I broke another a little louder. Hardly had my hand reached the trigger before the lioness was on her belly. Her eyes lazily opened, her ears were laid back on her head, her lips moved up and down, and her glance, fearful with its fixed intensity, wandered around her

chamber to seek the cause of the undefined sound that had caught her senses.

Before she saw me I sighted her right ear, and fired.

The smoke of my gun lay so heavy in the air that I could not see before me, but I heard a short strangled roar, that sounded like a good omen. Soon I could see the lioness stretched out where she was lying when I fired.

Her sides heaved, and her feet moved back and forward with a quick, convulsive motion.

I saw in an instant that she was only stunned, and would be on her feet in a moment more.

I hastily wound my turban around my arm, and sprang into the cover. Without losing a moment, I placed the muzzle of my gun to her head and fired. The bold spirit that ruled the woods was quenched with the report of my gun, and her graceful form lay at my feet a corpse.

I found my first ball had entered at the corner of the eye, and gone out at the top of the head, fracturing the skull without piercing it.

In an hour after my shots had been heard, this part of the forest, heretofore so silent and sacred, was invaded by a crowd of Arabs, who with a thousand wild cries and songs, placed the body of the lioness upon a rough litter, and bore it in state to the douar. There it was lain out upon a mat in the centre of the village, a black bull was killed in honor of the patron Saint, Sidi-Amar, and the entire night devoted to festivities.

It was a spectacle worthy of an artist's pencil, and fantastic and memorable even to an eye that was used to the daily life of the nomads.

The fires of cork and oak-wood flashed bright, while moving groups and spreading trees cast dark shadows on the background of snow. In the red light the women of the douar went to and fro, as they distributed the flesh of the

beef and the lioness. By the caldron that would have boiled an ox, Abdallah, the minstrel, chanted rude songs of valorous deeds, and the softened notes of a flute came from the women's tents.

Here sat the girls babbling away some romance of their fancy, there were grouped the men holding high converse on warlike deeds, and talking powder and ball. The herds in the park lowed at the unwonted light, the dogs came in and out from the shadow to seize a stray morsel, and pet gazels shook their heads, and rung their bells doubtfully at the bonfires.

Then, swelling and dying, the war-song rose on the air to the clapping of hands, and the gleam of waving steel, and all the people—wild phantoms draped in their white burnous arose to their feet as will arise one day the dead that lie in the valley of Jehcshaphat. The women sound the shrill battle cry, the men reply with the firing of guns, which roll away on the hills and come back in repeated echoes, and then the spectres sink again to the ground, and only the sighing flute breaks the sudden stillness.

The scene excited my fancy with its beauty, and my pride with its triumph; and I can never forget its kindly memories or the grateful hearts of these mountaineers.

When the stars gave place in the sky to the reddening dawn, the women retired to their tents. The men gathered around the tomb of Sidi-Amar, and with their faces to Mecca, devoutly listened to their holy seer as he recited the morning prayers. Then one by one the whole tribe came to me to bid me farewell, and I leaped in my saddle and pricked over the plain towards Guelma, with a heart at ease with myself, and full of emotion at the curious life I had witnessed.

Unfortunately for man, his physical powers have a limit, beyond which they cannot be pushed with impunity.

Since my first hunting expedition, I had passed more than

a hundred nights in the open air, sometimes secreted in the corner of a clearing, sometimes following the mountain-paths, always on foot, and crossing and re-crossing running streams as though they were dry ravines. At the same time, I had been badly fed, for although the Arabs offered me every hospitality they could afford, yet I hardly ever gave myself time to eat anything but cakes and dates, while I quenched my thirst at the mountain brook, and in addition to all this, whenever I was in the field, I was under the influence of the most powerful emotions. It may be that there are natures sufficiently rugged to stand such tests, but for me, I returned to Guelma seriously ill.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## MY FRIEND ABDALLAH, THE MINSTREL.

WHILE waiting for my health to become stronger, that I may continue the story of my divers hunts in their order, I will sketch for you, my dear reader, the character of two of the hosts that presided at the banquet in the Mahouna country that I have just described.

The first of these dignitaries is Abdallah, the improvisatore and minstrel.

One day, or rather, one evening, while returning home from a party where he had been a guest, he saw a big herd of wild hogs rooting up his newly sown wheat-field, with a pleasure apparently much greater than that of their host in making the discovery.

To run to his tent and hang up his flute where whilom hung his gun, required but a moment for one who understood how hard work it is to plant a field of wheat, and in two minutes he had regained the field, accompanied by five or six of his comrades. But, alas, the grunting, ungrateful herd, having eaten their fill, had disappeared, without even calling for their bill, leaving nothing but confusion and tracks to mark their place. Instead of the wild hogs, however, the party suddenly came across a lioness, that lay crouched in a furrow near where the boars had been at work.

Abdallah, who was at the head of his band, saw her first, as she lay tranquilly watching their coming.

The minstrel halted and pointed out her highness to his friends, who laughing, said to him, "Since she does you the honor of reclining on your ground, you should return the favor by singing something for her.

Abdallah was piqued by the ridicule, and seeing that it was a young lioness, about two years old, he walked forward towards her, supposing that she would escape when she saw him approaching.

When within about fifty paces, he struck up a ballad, the chorus of which ran in this wise :

" Oh, where is your spouse, my lady small,  
For without your spouse you're nothing at all."

He had not completed his verse before the lioness was on her feet, and with her head almost to the ground, and her ears lying close to her neck, she marched right up to the impertinent minstrel.

Abdallah was no coward because he was a great singer. He knelt down on one knee, and when the lioness was within ten paces, he sent three balls into her breast.

But this was a small wound to one of her species, and before the gay improvisatore could sing again, or fly, he lay senseless on his back, with the claws of the lioness on his shoulder, and her ivory teeth grasping the throat that had insulted her with the scandalous song. As the poor man gave no further sign of life, she then left him, and quietly withdrew from the field, stopping from time to time, to lick the blood that trickled from the wounds in her breast.

When she had completely disappeared, these valorous comrades who had at first fled, returned and carried off the breathless body of Abdallah. They thought they were bearing a corpse, but were mistaken, for thanks to a native physician, and a

rugged constitution, in a few months, our friend was as well as ever.

At the time I first made his acquaintance, his wounds had not yet healed, but this did not prevent his singing, if not very sweetly, yet at least on a very high key, and in a very loud voice. As with the Arabs the one that makes the greatest din is reputed the most brilliant singer, therefore in the Mahouna country, Abdallah occupied a very high rank among the native vocalists of his age.

After his discomfiture with the lioness in his own wheat-field, he always retained a most inveterate dislike, not only to lionesses, but also to lions of every sex and degree; and it was owing to my perpetual war on this animal that he immediately took me to his affections, and with every new victory sounded my praises in triumphal verses, far and near, with a voice that would not have discredited one of the bulls of Bashan.

CHAPTER XX.

MY FRIEND MOHAMMED-BEN-OUMBARK THE MANAUDER.

THE second personage of this part of the country whom I desire to introduce to the acquaintance of my readers, is Mohammed-ben-Oumbark.

Like his melodious compeer, he resided on the southern slope of the Mahouna, and in plain English was nothing more or less than a retired robber.

But such a robber! He had a well-earned name that will be handed down to future generations undimmed by the touch of years, though, perchance, the only time that his name was ever written, was when it found a place on my pages.

This was the way we made each other's acquaintance.

On my second visit to this country I noticed in my explorations, a ford where a half dozen paths converged, and thinking it a probable route for a lion, I had taken my post of observation on the bank, one evening as the night fell on the forest. At about eleven o'clock I heard a foot-fall, on one of the paths that came down to the water's edge. The place was so embowered in trees that scarcely a sunbeam ever touched the earth beneath, during the daytime, and much less likely the feeble rays of the moon at night, and so I relied almost entirely upon my ears to give me information of passing events.

I was comfortably seated on the root of a tree that grew by

the path, and a bush on either side of me, sheltered me from being seen by any animal on the road, until it came directly opposite to me. The noise approached little by little, though it appeared to be less than that made by a lion when walking on the stony path, whose heavy foot-fall one can hear from a considerable distance. At this moment I heard a cough. Now I have often heard the lion sneeze, but I never heard him cough, and judging from his voice, I should say, that if he ever did, it would be something like the explosion of a powder blast. "If it is not a lion, it must be a man, and a bold one to venture in such a place at midnight," said I to myself.

I confess I was displeased at the prospect of encountering so dangerous a marauder. Being constantly in the Mahouna country, as a matter of policy I had always avoided shedding blood under every circumstance, though I found myself in this instance almost obliged to do so for my own safety.

I resolved to try a surprise in order to avoid this sad necessity.

I placed my gun at my side, having first cocked it, and loosened my dagger in its sheath; I then took off my burnous and held it loose in my hand, waiting the approach of the marauder. At the moment he came opposite to me, I threw my burnous over his head, and grasped him around his body with both my arms pinning his own to his side.

The word *traitor* was the first he uttered. I did not stop, however, to parley words, but taking advantage of the position in which I held him, and my old habit of wrestling, I passed my leg around his, and threw him to the earth. When down, I called out:

"Never fear; down with your arms, I am Gerard, the lion killer!"

My night wanderer immediately gave up. In five minutes more we were smoking the same pipe around a fire, that

brought out the figure and face of my new acquaintance in bold relief.

He was a man of the ordinary stature, but dry, nervous, and with a most impressive and extraordinary countenance, and when animated, his blue eyes lighted the dark shadows of his capuchin like tapers. His gestures were few, but they spoke like words. After an hour's talk, we two, who had met only at the hazard of our lives, were like old comrades, equal in everything, save the dignity that the character of "*The lion killer*" gave me, a dignity I never declined, and that Mohammed *The marauder*, was pleased to acknowledge. So we passed the rest of the night together watching the lion's path, and the intervals of waiting were beguiled by Mohammed's stories as he related the history of his life.

After this time, from which I date the commencement of a valuable friendship, Mohammed-ben-Oumbark never failed in coming to see me when I came in the Mahouna country. Ordinarily it was the middle of the night that he chose for his visit, coming up to my side in the depths of the forest, and sitting down beside me like an invited guest. When in camp, he tells to all the world that I am his best friend, and that he will kill like a hound any one who harms a hair of my head, and generally finishes his proclamation by declaring that there are only two men in Africa at the present time, to wit—he and I.

Now that my friend, coming under the influence of civilization, has adopted a regular mode of life, and made an honorable amende for a crowd of past errors by penitence and reform, now that he has smoothed the ermine fur of outraged justice, whose anger had burned at his vagabond tricks, now, in a word, that he has put his house in order, I am free to give to my reader some of the tales that he recounted to me under the listening stars. The truth of these stories is known to all the inhabitants of the Mahouna country, whose

children for fifteen years were lulled to quiet by threats of the coming of the great night robber, my friend, the hero of this chapter.

Mohammed belonged to a family formerly of some wealth, but that had been despoiled of its goods before the French occupation. After the death of his father, he found himself the fortunate possessor of a young and lovely wife, a tent rather the worse for wear, a dagger with a sharp point, and nothing more.

"With this weapon," said he to his wife, "I will carve from the rough earth house and lands, and from nature horned cattle and horses, until our wealth will exceed that of those who spoiled my father's house." Without delay he began the fulfillment of his promise.

The French troops detailed to make the first expedition into Constantine, were assembled at this time at the camp of Mejez Amar. All the neighboring tribes being still unsubjected to French rule, the officers had great difficulty in procuring horses and mules, and Mohammed undertook this duty. With an effrontery that never left him, he presented himself at the outposts of our camp, was arrested and carried before the officer in authority. To him he declared without any hesitation, that he belonged to a free tribe, but that he had come to offer his services to the French, and was ready to furnish them anything they might want, either saddle horses or beasts of burden. His frankness pleased, and his offer was accepted.

The next morning, by a delivery of some handsome horses, he performed his promise and showed what he could do. Thenceforth they gave him orders to fulfill, just as though he was a regular trader, and had stables without number at his command. They described to him the color and age of the horse that was wanted, and at the appointed moment the animal stood panting at the camp, with the stoical rider at his

side, waiting to receive his reward. In order to fill all the orders he received, Mohammed sometimes visited the Arabs and sometimes the Kabyles.

They first attach their horses to a cord fastened to two stakes driven in the ground, either within or without the tent, but generally without.

To be successful in horse-stealing, the robber is obliged to unfasten the horse and carry him off with perfect secrecy. It may readily be imagined that this is no easy work to accomplish in a populous camp, protected by a multitude of dogs, and yet Mohammed called it child's play.

The operation was the more delicate with the Kabyles, as they live in houses without windows, and fasten their doors after entering at night. This was his manner of dealing with these people, and by which he almost always came off successful.

With the agility and caution of a cat he would climb on the roof of the shed where the beast that he coveted was stabled. Then he carefully pulled away the thatch, until he had made a hole large enough to introduce his body, and softly let himself down to his arm's length, and then drop down in the house at the risk of bouncing like the nightmare on the stomach of the lord of the manor. Once safely within, and no one awakened, he felt around on the fireplace for a live coal under the ashes, and blowed a half flame to see how things were located. Having made his survey without arousing any of the inmates, he would open the door, lead out the horse that pleased him best, and flee off into the night.

But if by chance some one of the sleepers that strew the floor, awakens, Mohammed lies down by his side, and snores like a trooper, his dusky burnous covering his face, and making him look like the rest of the family. If the host becomes fully awake and attempts to rise, the *yataghan* sends him again to sleep, and he lies down for ever.

One evening, when Mohammed was blowing a coal on the hearth of one of his mountain acquaintances, who owned a horse by far too good for one of his condition, there suddenly arose the sound of voices in the yard, and a knocking was heard at the door. In an instant, the four or five men who were asleep on the floor, sprung to their feet, but while they were groping about, Mohammed had opened the door, and found two horsemen that stood asking hospitality and holding the bridles of their horses. Mohammed said in a disguised voice, "God be with you, enter, and I will take care of your horses."

The strangers resigned the bridles of their animals to the hospitable Kabyle, as they supposed him to be, and entered the house. Mohammed swung himself into one of the saddles, and leading the second horse by his bridle, swept down to the plain. As he rode away, he called to the proprietor of the house, "Take good care of your guests: Mohammed-ben-Oumbark will take care of their horses!"

But this good fortune did not always await such laudable industry, and during the course of his life, my honest friend had received so many bullets and sabre cuts, that they would have killed any more prudent man. One day I asked him how it was that he, who must so often have met lions on his nocturnal excursions, managed always to come off free: he answered with enthusiasm:

"The lion is everything, and man is nothing. 'Tis only the lion that knows how to impose respect and fear—man ought to be governed by a lion."

"Then, you never had any cause of complaint against him?"

"No; on the contrary, he has always aided me in my forays, and carried disorder and terror to the douar, that I might walk by his side, and take what I chose.

"While he killed for his good pleasure, I stole for

mine, and neither of us were apt to come home empty handed.

"It is true, if he was hungry when I met him, he always asked me go shares with him in whatever I had with me, and I never turned a deaf ear.

"Only once did I ever find him unreasonable. It was the evening of El-cid-Kebir, and every good Mussulman on that day, as you know, kills the fatted calf. I, however, never liking to take away the life of one of my own poor dumb beasts, generally selected my repast from the herds of my neighbors. As I was coming home with the sheep I had just taken, thrown over my shoulder, I met a lion.

"'Seignior,' I said to him, 'I am very sorry, but you can't have my sheep this evening, as I want to keep it for the feast to-morrow, like a good Mussulman as I am.'

"The lion made believe he did not understand me, and became more and more pressing in his request.

"I then left the path to take refuge in a grotto that I knew quite near, thinking I would remain there until morning, and return home by daylight. Before going into the grotto, I looked over my shoulder, and the lion had disappeared; but I understood the gentleman a little too well to think that he had gone, and therefore hid myself in the furthest end of the cave.

"In about an hour's time I began to find it lonely in this marmot's hole, and thought I would just step out, to see how matters looked out of doors. On reaching the entrance, and bracing myself with one hand on each side of the opening, I slowly protruded my head to take a peep outside. At this instant, I was suddenly harpooned by the capuchin of my burnous, and I had just strength enough to draw in my head in order to avoid being dragged out in the open air like a porcupine.

The lion, who had been all this time crouching down over

the top of the cave, had snatched at me with his paw, like a cat, and seizing my burnous, instead of my head, he commenced tearing it to pieces, at the same time venting his anger with low growls, that sounded very unpleasantly, so near to me as he was. Fearing lest he might insert his paw into my shallow cave, I pushed out the sheep he was coveting. He sprang on it without the slightest scruples, and had the indelicacy to eat it before my very eyes.

"At last, when he had made up his mind to leave, after his pleasant little lunch, he marched off without any thanks for my kindness, leaving the skin of the sheep on one side, with the smoking remains of his supper, and on the other my new burnous, all torn in pieces.

"The bloody thief did not leave me time enough to go to the neighbors to get another sheep, for when he left for the woods, the day began to break, and I was obliged to go home and kill one of my own lambs, or else go without mutton on the day of El-cid-Kebir, from which poverty may the prophet defend me.

"This was the first time that I was ever reduced to this strait, and it is only the lion that can ever bring me there again."

This is the second personage whose portrait I desire to place in my gallery of native Arabs, and as I have now completely recovered from the fever, if it so pleases the reader, we will return to the narrative of my hunts.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING.

ONE day in the month of February, 1846, Monsieur de Tourville, who was in command in the Guelma district, sent me word that the tribe of Beni-Foughal had prayed that I might be sent to their aid, to deliver them from a lioness and her cubs that had installed themselves, without any permission, in their country.

In one hour I was on horseback by the side of a Sheik of their tribe, and at sunset we reached his douar, that was situated at the foot of Mount Jebel-Meziour.

The next morning, with early light, I began to beat up the low woods, where it was said the lioness kept her little ones. Here I found the lair of the mother, and a beautiful little cub, about as large as Angora cat, nestled in a bed of dry leaves, carefully arranged beneath the shelter of a thicket of low limbed trees.

I picked up the little nursling, and carried it down to the douar, and after leaving it in charge of the women, went back to await the lioness when she should return home.

When I again reached the lion's retreat, the sun had set, and as I entered beneath the close vault of matted vines that covered the dry leaf-bed, I discovered that I could not see a yard to the right hand or to the left. By the aid of my

hunting knife, I cut away the branches, so that I had a little aisle before me, and then seated myself at the foot of a cork tree, to await the progress of events. My order of battle was very simple where there were so few foes, and I had such small resources, it was simply to wait until the lioness showed her head inside of my clearing, and then to blow out her brains with my gun; that is, if I could.

As night gathered her folds, closer and closer, around the bower, I brought all my senses into play to give me information of the approach of the animal. My hearing became acute with the lack of seeing, and every noise came to my ear with perfect distinctness, and the hundred voices of nature, that whisper all night in the forest, told me the motions of her creatures.

Now a rat, rustling in the dried leaves, and now a tapir's tread, as he quitted his couch, seemed like that of my friend, the lioness.

Then a jackal would come prying around in search of some of the crumbs that had fallen from his mistress's table, and for a moment deceive me, until his mumbling the bones the lion's whelps had picked, would destroy the illusion. Then the wind's motion in the trees, and then some insect burrowing in the earth, or restless bird would give a sound that would draw my attention, and tax my powers to explain. For more than two mortal hours I was doomed to wait and watch, until all my nerves became strung like a bow-string, and my arm was weary with the weight of my gun. Finally, I leaned back against the tree, with the firm determination of waiting until the eyes of the lioness should come forth to lighten the darkness and show me my target.

I must needs digress a moment to inform the reader why it was that I had been called to aid the Arabs against their enemy, without their attempting anything for themselves.

In the year 1840, a lioness had given birth to a litter of young in the woods where I was now watching six years after.

The same Sheik who had come with me from Guelma, had called together sixty men of his tribe, and they had hunted through this very cover, and found two lion whelps. Enchanted with their discovery, the band carried off the helpless animals, and marched down the mountain, singing songs of victory. The lioness finding out her loss, followed the party, and bounded on one of the bravest of the warriors in the middle of the band; then receiving a mortal wound she sprang on another, and tore him to pieces, falling dead on her victim, and the two hunters were carried home side by side with the dead body of the lioness. On my arrival at the douar, the Sheik had recounted to me the story of this hunt in its minutest particulars. As he told the tale, the different actors whom he called by name, would speak, saying, "That was I," and display the ghastly wounds made by the bereaved mother.

The remembrance of this tragedy had protected, on this occasion, the cradle of the lioness, and although the nursery fare was an expensive addition to the usual cost of supporting a lioness, the Arabs bore the demands of the growing family without any attempt at resistance. This was the cause of my being found on a dark cold night, crouched in the forest from which I had a little before taken a lion's whelp, while the warriors of Beni-Foughal were reposing in their tents.

It might have been about eight o'clock in the evening, when I heard the steps of what seemed to be a large animal. The nearer they came, the heavier they seemed, until at last I was certain of it—it was the lioness.

When within about six paces, the animal suddenly stopped. Fearing that she had seen or scented me, and would clear

the intervening distance with a bound, I arose, hoping to catch a glimpse at least of her eyes. Standing with my back to the tree, with my gun to my shoulder, and my eye fixed on the impenetrable curtain of foliage that hung before me, I could not see the faintest light, nor hear the slightest sound.

My imagination, more rapid than sense, and aided by past memories, brought the lioness before me with outstretched neck, her ears laid back, and her body trembling with excitement as she made ready her leap. One sees often such spectres, when awaiting in the dark, an invisible foe. Yet she did not bound, and the time of her waiting appeared to me immensely long. Huge drops of sweat, in spite of the cold weather, came out on my forehead and rolled down into my eyes, and my nerves commenced to fail me, when suddenly a thought entered my mind.

“Why in the world didn’t I climb up this cork tree, instead of sitting down at its foot?”

“And what is there to hinder me from climbing it now, and putting myself in a place of safety, twenty feet from ground? Who will see it? Who will know it? Wouldn’t any one else do the same thing in my place?”

I thought of it but once, and then put it away as unmanly, and immediately grew calm again.

I am happy, to-day, while writing these lines, after six years spent in the tumult of the wildest emotions, and marked by more than one tragic drama, to remember and approve the decision of that hour.

It was then more than at any other time, that I comprehended the difference that exists between a man who exposes his life in broad daylight, before witnesses, and he, who has only the light of the stars to guide him, and himself to bear him witness. The satisfaction of knowing that I had not

thought of the tree in the daytime, and had regarded it as a mean action to take refuge there in the moment of the greatest peril, produced in my mind a perfect calm, that was worthy of a greater test than the one I had experienced, or a more fearful denouement than the one that followed. Judge of my disappointment and relief, when I heard instead of the wild roar of a lioness charging with a howl of rage at the loss of her children, only the plaintive and hungry whine of a cub seeking his nursing mother.

Even to this day I cannot think of the turbulent emotions of the heart that were caused by that little scamp, without laughing.

For want of better game, I took the cub in my arms, and wrapping it in the skirt of my burnous, I started to regain the path that led to the douar.

After three or four hours of hard walking across ravines, and through the tangled woods, after many halts to listen to uncertain sounds that I could not explain, that I first imagined to be the distant roar, or the furious course of the lioness on my track, and then, what they really were, the low articulations of forest language that chants in well-known words to nature's children ; at last, I came out of the edge of the timber land, and the barking of the dogs led me to the douar.

My first care was to examine my cub, and compare him with the other.

It was a male, and about a third larger than its mate, which was a female, and his dignified deportment and gentle grace, won all hearts at first sight. I gave him the name of Hubert, after my patron saint. While the little lioness shunned all observation, and received the caresses showered upon her, only with blows and scratches, Hubert stretched himself out on the hearth, and looked around with a quiet

air of wonder; without the least apparent wildness. The women could never finish caressing him, and with a womanly appreciation of his wants, they brought him a goat with a fresh bag of milk to act the part of a mother. Nanny having been laid down on her side, and held still by two Arabs who prevented her from kicking or running away, as she seemed well disposed to do, one of her teats was brought to Hubert's lips.

He did not seem at once to understand what was meant, but the moment the first drop of milk touched his lips he fastened on to his new mother with a devotion that could never be excelled. The lioness obstinately refused to eat in spite of the example of her brother, and would only lie down where she could find some place to conceal herself from view. Hubert passed the first night of his civilized life with me, sleeping calmly at my side, covered with the skirt of my burnous.

On the next day I hunted over the whole of the mountain with the men of the tribe, and examined every lair without success. As it was drawing near evening, I did not return to the douar, but having shared the supper of a herdsman whom I met on the hills, I again installed myself under the bower where I had watched the previous evening.

But the day wasted to night, and waned again into day, and no lioness came to disturb my solitary vigil. I learned sometime after, that she had left the neighborhood after I had robbed her cradle of her two children, carrying a third away with her to a safer home.

This disappearance of the old lady, together with the capture of two of her cubs, having completely calmed the inhabitants of Beni-Foughal, I left their country to return to Guelma, carrying with me my two adopted children.

Shortly after my return the female departed this life, and went where the good lions go. Her early demise from the

scene of so much anticipated usefulness, and in the bud of her youthful days, was owing to a difficulty in teething, a process of nature very dangerous to the leonine family, unaided as they generally are by suitable medical advice. But her brother grew apace, and as day after day brought forth some new evidence of childish grace, or sentiment of a kindly heart, he became beloved by all who knew him, and his young appetite drank dry nearly all the she-goats in the camp.

I write these lines with a chastened sorrow, to recall the many acts and infantile graces of my child Hubert, that will be a pleasant memory not only to myself, but to the many comrades of his early days, whose lonely hours were enlivened by his quaint gambols, and affectionate caresses.

Besides his most intimate friends, he had a great number of ordinary ones. Hubert counted but these three, the trumpeter Lehman, the farrier Bibart, and the spahi Rostain, who a year afterwards was torn to pieces under my very eyes by the lion of Mejez-Amar.

When Hubert first joined the squadron, his name was entered on a little book as a second rate private of dragoons, awaiting promotion. Everything he did of any renown was immediately recorded in this book, together with all his marches and campaigns.

These are some extracts I have taken from the volume which show his high character, and rapid advancement in the career of arms.

20th April, 1846, (Hubert was three months old at this time). The trumpets sounded the call, "to horse." The squadron assembled in the court of the barracks, in order to march to the parade ground. The cavalier Hubert having been locked up in the second story room, and hearing the call, springs up to the window and calls out, "present."

The officer of the day not having heard him, marked him as *absent at parade*.

The captain commanded, "*in fours, march!*" and the trumpets sounding to deploy, Hubert, regardless of propriety leaped down into the court before all the troops.

By reason of this active desire to do his duty, the mark against his name was erased, and he was entered as being present.

15th May, 1846—Sous cavalier Hubert having strangled his goat, who was acting in the capacity of a wet nurse, is named cavalier of the first class.

8th September, 1846—Hubert made a sortie upon the market-place during market hours, and caused a complete rout, and was left master of the field. He upset the gens d'armes, killed several sheep and a donkey, and surrendered himself only to his friends, Lehman, Bibart and Rostain, who ran to coax him home again.

For this feat Hubert was raised to the rank of Corporal, he was decked with a chain of honor around the neck, and was appointed to the post of guardian of the stables.

10th January, 1847—A Bedouin having come wandering about the horses belonging to the stables, Hubert suspecting him to be a marauder, broke his chain, seized him, and carried him into his sentry box until the officer of the watch made his round, when he delivered up his prisoner in a rather dilapidated state. This achievement gained for him the grade of quarter-master, with the decoration of an additional chain.

April, 1847—Hubert having strangled a horse, and torn in pieces two soldiers of the line, receives the grade of officer and has apartments assigned to him in a cage.

Poor Hubert! The government that had been so good and indulgent over so many peccadilloes, and had even pardoned some misdeeds of a higher grade, on account of his gentle

disposition, could no longer close its eyes to this sad breach of all military discipline. Hubert was condemned to death, or imprisonment for life; and it was I, his dearest friend, who had so often shared with him my bed, that was charged with the execution of the sentence.

My first intention was to give him his liberty, but I feared lest having been always accustomed to the presence of men, he would only come back to the camp to plunder and kill, and so I took the next best course, and Hubert soon found himself the lonely tenant of an iron cage instead of the honored guest of Guelma.

With the first days of his imprisonment, I would occasionally come to his cage in the evening to while away some of his lonely hours. As soon as the door was opened, he would bound joyously out, and then after kissing each other in the tenderest manner, we would commence a game of hide-and-go-seek. One evening, however, he embraced me so lovingly that I would have been smothered had not my comrades run to my aid, and with their scabbards relieved me from his crushing caresses. This was the last time we indulged in this game together, and yet I can do my friend the justice to say, that I never saw the least bad intent on his part, for whenever he was gambolling with me or any other of his acquaintances, he always avoided using his teeth or claws, and his manners were ever most kind and affectionate.

After he was confined to his cage, his character became very much changed, and he was irritable and restless; walking up and down his narrow limits, he made the walls resound to his heavy voice and the clanking of his chain. I then conceived the idea of separating myself from him, and made known my intentions.

An officer of the king of Sardinia wanted to buy him for three thousand francs, but I could not sell Hubert, as I had sold the skins of lions I had killed—Hubert, my child of the

desert. The Duke d'Aumale had honored me with his kindness, and I resolved to present him my pet, praying that ample room might be given to him in the gardens at Algiers, and that he might have everything that would tend to his comfort as long as he lived.

## CHAPTER XXII.

MY ADOPTED CHILD LEAVES GUELMA, AND WELCOMES ME AT  
PARIS.

It was in the month of October, 1847, that Hubert left Guelma to the great regret of the ladies, to whom he had been exceedingly gallant, and the soldiers of every grade and service, who all loved him as much as they did me.

Lehman and Bibart got very drunk, in order the better to support the grief of separation, but they were none the less moved when the last moment came round, and were obliged to be locked up in the guard-house before they would allow their friend to be removed.

Once at Algiers, Hubert was found to be too grand and beautiful to remain in their provincial gardens, and it was decided that he should make a visit to Paris, and I was detached to accompany him. The poor animal was indeed too large and beautiful for the sad life he was thereafter to lead. The captain of the vessel that carried us across the Mediterranean, allowed me to have the cage open for a few hours at a time when Hubert was eating his meals, having first stretched cables across the deck to prevent the curious passengers from coming too near my pet. As soon as the door was open, Hubert came out, and after thanking me for the privilege after his fashion, and given me as many tokens of his regard as the circumstances would permit, he walked up and down the deck as far as his chain would allow him to

go. Then he ate his breakfast, which usually consisted of a beefsteak of about ten pounds, and having completed his ablutions and made his toilette, he would lay down in the sun to take a nap. When the hour of recreation was passed, he entered his cell, deafening us a little with his complaints against the narrowness of his berth, and then awaited very patiently his dinner time.

In this manner passed the last happy days of his life.

Upon reaching Toulon we separated, he to go to Marseilles and I to Cuers to see my family. I was soon in the arms of those I loved best on earth, and yet all the while, in spite of my occupations and pleasures, I felt a void that nothing could fill. Hubert was ever at my side, if not in person, at least in spirit, and I constantly mistook the sound of the mountain torrents for the first low tones of his voice. I could not stay away from him any longer, and returned to Marseilles. Although it had been only a few weeks since I had left my child, I could not help feeling shocked at the change that was apparent in his whole bearing; he was no longer the same being. After the first joy of meeting, that animated every lineament of his beautiful head, had passed, he relapsed into the same mournful indifference. His look seemed to say to me, "Why did you leave me? Where am I? Where are they taking me to? You have come back, but will you stay?"

I was so much moved by his mute eloquence, that I could not stay in the room with him, but left brusquely. As I went out I heard him bounding in his cage, roaring with anger. I hastened back to his side, when he became calm and laid himself down against the bars, where I could pat him with my hand. In a little while he went to sleep with my arm resting on his head, and I stole away on tiptoe, so as not to trouble his repose. Sleep is the great oblivion, as well for the lion as for man.

Three months after this last interview I reached Paris, and my first visit was paid to Mons. Leon Bertrand, the editor of the *Journal des Chasseurs*.

Honor where honor is due.

It seemed to me that this naturalist writer, whose name is known to every one who ever fired a gun or wore a hunting knife, the founder of a sporting review without a rival in the world, should receive my first visit. I had no personal acquaintance with him, although a correspondence that had arisen between us had already revealed to me the spirit of the man, and attached me to him by one of those sympathetic bonds that, once formed, are never broken. We had not talked together more than an hour, before we were like two brothers. Are there not natures made to love each other with a regard that is born with the first clasping of the hands?

On the next day, which was the first day of the year 1848, we went together to the Jardin des Plantes, accompanied by a lady and her daughter, who desired to be present at my first interview with Hubert.

On entering the department of the garden apportioned to ferocious beasts, as they are pleased to call them, I was astonished at the narrow limits in which the animals were obliged to live, in a mortal repose, as well as the pestilential odor that exhaled from the dens, which the hyenas and other unclean beasts might endure, but which most surely would kill the lions and panthers, those animals with clean sleek skins that are neatness personified.

While I was slowly approaching the cage of my friend, thinking of the unpleasant subjects that had been suggested to my mind, he was lying down half asleep, regarding at intervals with half shut eyes, the persons who were passing and re-passing before him.

All of a sudden he raised his head, his tail moved, his eyes

dilated, a nervous motion contracted the muscles of his face ; he had seen the uniform of the spahis, but had not yet recognized his friend. He had scented the air of the desert, and heard again the trumpets of Guelma, but had not yet recognized the plains of his native land. Nevertheless his searching eye scanned me from head to foot, over and over again, as though seeking some point of recognition. I drew nearer and nearer, and no longer able to restrain my emotion I stretched out my hand to him through the bars.

Oh ! it was touching, that moment of growing recognition !

Without ceasing his earnest gaze, he applied his nose to my hand, and drew in knowledge with a long breath. At each inhalation his attitude became more noble, his look more satisfied and affectionate. Under the uniform that had been so dear to him, he began to recognize the friend of his heart.

I felt that that it only needed a single word to dissipate all doubt.

"*Hubert!*" I said, as I laid my hand on him, "*my old soldier !*"

Not another word. With a furious bound and a note of welcome, he sprang against the iron bars, that bent and shivered with the blow. My friends fled in terror, calling to me to do the same.

Noble animal ! you made the world tremble even in your ecstasies of pleasure.

Hubert was standing with his cheek against the grating, attempting to break down the obstacle that separated us, magnificent to behold as he shook the walls of the buildings with his roars of joy and anger.

His enormous tongue licked the hand that I abandoned to his caresses, while with his paws he gently tried to draw me to him. If any one attempted to come near, he fell into frenzies of rage, and when the visitors fell back to a distance

he became calm and caressing as before, handling me with his huge paws, rubbing against the bars, and licking my hand, while every gesture, and moan, and look, told of his joy and his love.

I cannot express how hard a thing was our parting of that day.

Twenty times I came back to speak to him, and to try and make him understand that I was coming back again, and each time that I started to go, he shook the gallery with his bounds and heart-rending roars.

For some time I came every day to see my friend in his solitary prison-house, and sometimes we passed several hours together in most familiar intercourse. But after a little while I noticed that he became sad and changed, and seemed utterly dispirited.

I consulted the keepers of the garden, and they thought that it was owing to my visits and the regret at my leaving. I then tried to keep away, and gradually to accustom him to my absence, hoping to win him over to a calmer state of mind.

One flowering day in the month of May, I entered the garden as usual. One of the keepers came forward, and respectfully saluting me, said, with sorrow :

"Don't come any more, sir, *Hubert is dead !*"

I turned on my heel and hastened out of the garden, bowed down by the heavy grief at the loss of my dearest friend, and the crowding memories of the past. The lonely mountain post, his dead leaf cradle, the burnous that had covered us both, the camp life at Guelma, all flicker and go before me even at this time, when I return to the garden, as I sometimes do, to wander and think of my poor friend.

Thus died this child of the wilderness, that I had taken from his mother's breast, from the pure air of the mountain, from liberty and the supremest dominion, to wither in a

prison. In the forest he would have been living yet—civilization killed him.

Hereafter live and rule in absolute liberty, fierce Sultans of Atlas! never again will I raise my hand to bring you into slavery. Hereafter we only meet face to face, and death for death. What is the destruction that comes like the thunderbolt in the forest, underneath the midnight sky, to the slow agony of the prison-house? Better a thousand times, the iron ball of the hunter, than the iron shackle of a gaoler!

## CHAPTER XXIII.

SHOWING THE SKILL OF THE LION IN THE COMMISSARIAT  
DEPARTMENT.

IN the spring of the year 1846, a body of troops, among which was myself, was marching towards the frontiers of Tunis.

One morning after the tents were struck, and the men had been on the road about an hour, while they were following a path on the right bank of the Ouled Meleh, in the Enbeil country, they came across a lion, or rather, a lion came across them. The path was quite narrow, and the troops were marching in file, when the lion calmly walked across their path, between the musicians and the head of the column, and then, when he had gone about a gun-shot off, he quietly sat down on a little hillock, to see the parade of so many men, that must have been to him a spectacle as curious as unusual.

Colonel de Tourville, who was in command of the forces, had caused the cavalry to remain behind, until all the other troops had passed the defile, and therefore I did not learn of the circumstance until some time had elapsed, and then through the medium of one of the guards who had cantered back to tell me.

I immediately set out on the trail of the animal, on horse-back, and a spahi accompanied me to hold my horse, in case I wanted to dismount.

I followed the track as best I could, and in about half an hour I saw the lion ahead of me, leaving the open country for the woods, and an ox walking directly in front of him. The spahi then told me that he had traversed the line of march of the soldiers in the same manner, with the ox walking ahead of him all the while.

This circumstance, as insignificant as it may appear to many persons, is of much importance to those who are seeking for information. For myself, it teaches me two things :

First, that the lion is a faithful father to his young children, since he goes very far for the purpose of getting them live food.

Second, that he certainly has the power to magnetize his victims, and lead them where he chooses, the more conveniently to put them to death.

When I first saw the animal, he had crossed a bare ravine with precipitous banks, and was walking over a narrow interval of ground, that separated him from the woods. When he saw us riding towards him, he stopped, and the ox that was about ten paces ahead of him stopped also ; the lion then laid himself down on the grass, and gazed across the plain at us as we approached. We rode at full gallop, and did not halt until we reached the edge of the gully, and within sixty paces of the lion. Here I dismounted, and gave my horse in charge of the spahi, and taking my gun on my arm, proceeded to reconnoitre the enemy's position.

I found him camped very securely. Before him descended the steep bank of the ravine, that would have been very difficult to mount, even without a foe at the top. To have climbed this ascent to within fifteen paces of the waiting animal would have been more than folly, for even did the lion choose to await my coming until I had fired my shot, he would not have needed more than a second or two

of life to have sprung down upon me, hurling me to the bottom of the ravine in his death struggles.

There was no other way of getting within shot than crossing this ravine, and the lion was in too exposed a position to wait long for my military tactics. I thought that if I should walk forward, the lion would advance on his side, and always keeping the highest land, according to his custom, we might find some middle ground whereon to do battle.

What I had anticipated occurred. When I dismounted and took my gun, the lion arose from the place where he had been lying, and when I came forward down the slope of the ravine on my side, he, with an assured step, commenced descending his own side to meet me.

Where was the generosity that most writers accord to the lion, to be found in the act of this specimen? Was it hunger that impelled him, who had held an ox for so long a time in his power, to come forward with lofty menace, the moment a stranger showed himself on the plain?

Now commenced the manoeuvres of the two leaders of the approaching combat, and the tactics of noble war.

With my double barrel rifle lying in the hollow of my arm, on the full cock, I carefully and slowly walked down the hill, taking care to pick the smoothest ground, and keep my adversary's movements in sight. The lion did the same on his side, with equal care, but like a high bred cock, he seemed to be thinking of anything but me, and scarcely ever looked at me.

As the two sides of the ravine converged like a funnel, in a little while I was within about thirty paces, and then halted. The lion did the same until I stopped, and then without descending the valley any further, whereby he might lose the preëminence of his position, he commenced walking to the right and left, like a sentinel on duty. Each time that he passed in front of me in his promenade he halted, and

scowled at me, and wrinkled his lips to show his teeth ; he then would raise his long mane until it shadowed his face, and utter a hollow roar, like the mutterings of a coming storm. So the Arab horde that scours the plain, and halts before you, flaunts its burnous, clatters its arms, and chants its Bedouin cry before the last great charge that sweeps like a whirlwind over you.

When he reached the end of his walk, he paused, and threw up large masses of dirt and sod with his fore paws like a bull, grumbling all the while, and shaking with anger.

As he was becoming more and more excitable at every minute, and as my first shot would call forth all the force of the pent-up storm, I prepared to make the attack without losing any time. I carefully selected a sod on the precipitous bank, where I might sit without danger of slipping to the bottom of the ravine. Taking my seat, I brought my gun to my shoulder, when the lion was directly opposite to me. At this motion, which the enemy fully comprehended, he attempted to crouch down, but was not able to do so on the declivity, and could only gather himself up like a goat, with his haunches backed against the hill.

I aimed back of the shoulder, as near as might be at the heart, and fired.

The lion bit the earth, writhed for an instant, and then, with his great eye on me, he bounded in the air to cross the ravine, and fell within ten steps of where I stood. He commenced to gather himself together again for another leap, holding on to some roots that grew out of the bank, and I could see the blood spirt out of both sides where my ball had gone entirely through his body. Before he had recovered himself, I sent my other ball in his breast. He little by little loosened his hold, his limbs relaxed, and rolling down the hill, he fell with a dull sound on the rocky bed beneath.

I commenced re-loading my gun, but found I had left my

cartridge-box hanging to the pommel of my saddle, and hastened up the bank to get it. Evils never come alone, says the proverb, and when I searched the plain, I found my horse had disappeared with my spahi, and could nowhere be seen.

I hunted and halloood for more than an hour, but there was no mortal thing to be seen on that desolate plain.

At last, from the elevation of a hill, I saw a mounted Arab giving chase to my horse, that seemed little disposed to surrender his newly-gained liberty. I followed the course they were taking, and at about sunset I had re-loaded my gun and was again in my saddle, flying back to the ravine where I had left my lion. I reached the scene of the conflict a little before night, and found plenty of blood, but the lion was off. As long as I could make anything out in the twilight, I followed the trail, and then betook myself to a neighboring douar to pass the night.

The next morning found me again on the trail, that was colored at every step with blood. But presently it crossed a brook, and then the marks ceased. The soil was dry and rocky, and the country wooded, and so I was obliged to give it up and rejoin my squadron that was to accompany the expedition to Souh Ras.

A few days after, an Arab runner came into camp, to tell me that his tribe had found the lion not far from where I had left him, dead on the plain, a feast for the vultures.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## A DIGRESSION FOR VARIETY'S SAKE.

THE 1st of June, 1846, our squadrons were encamped under the walls of Tabessa.

The 2d, a convoy of sick from Guelma, together with their escort, was attacked and killed to a man by the Arabs.

The 3d, our troops under General Randon, with the cavalry, attacked the enemy, and took exemplary vengeance.

The 19th, at noon, while we were in bivouac in the Han-encha country, a soothsayer with a multitude of fanatics under his command, marched against our camp, thinking to surprise us like sheep that slumber in the noonday shade.

Before the Arabs were within gunshot of our outposts the alarm was given. Full of confidence in their soothsayer, who had promised them that our powder should be turned into water, they waited for us to come within pistol-shot without firing a gun. We made a charge, and drove through them like wild boars through the reeds in the marshes, cutting them down on every side, and making them pay dearly for their misplaced confidence.

At the moment the general gave the signal for the charge, a number of the fanatics showed themselves at the foot of a wooded hill, a hundred paces on our right. Our company charged the rascals, who after having fired into us as we rode up, dodged like foxes, as they were, into the woods. The horsemen threw themselves from their saddles, and pursued

the scamps on foot, and then commenced a very amusing fight. Dodging around bushes and between rocks, sometimes on foot and sometimes on horseback, we followed our foes, and they, when they got too hard pressed, would scramble up a tree.

The fight lasted until night, the French were everywhere victorious, and the soothsayer had to leave the country, to avoid the merited anger of his dupes.

At the end of forty<sup>4</sup>days the troops returned to garrison, and the third regiment of spahis to Guelma.

## CHAPTER XXV.

THE MISFORTUNES OF LAKDAR—A LION THAT DEVoured THE  
FACULTY OF A COLLEGE.

I HAD hardly arrived at Guelma, before I had complaints preferred by my friends in the Mahouna country against a great red lion that had pitched his tent in their neighborhood, and mocked at all the incantations of their sages, and the reputation of their warriors.

The fever was still lingering about my system, but I longed for the fresh winds of the mountain, and believing the best medicine would be some lion's blood, started for a hunt about the first of August.

Among those who had paid tribute to his mightiness, none had been taxed heavier than one Lakdar, who had been assessed twenty-nine beeves, forty-five sheep, besides mules and jackasses. This was partly owing to the poor devil's farm being situated in so pleasing a contiguity to the mountains. Indeed his rugged field seemed more adapted for the abode of lions than men. Fancy to yourself a little clearing of land on the slope of the hills, cut up by deep ravines and surrounded by woods, where the sun only shone at intervals on the savage picture of tents and rocks, and you will have an idea of the spot where Lakdar had reared his penates.

To counterbalance these hardships of nature, there were a few fields that the settler had reduced to cultivation, and

orchard laden with fruit, a garden odorous with flowers, and a clear spring that leaped from the earth and murmured down the hills. These were delights that in this sultry clime were worth the wealth of sultans, and gave Lakdar a fortitude perfectly stoical under the attacks of his enemy.

I found the little camp surrounded by a hedge six feet high and three feet thick, which the lion was accustomed to jump over, and selecting his dinner, carry it off to the woods with the same ease that a fox would seize and carry off a duck from the quacking brood. The first night or two was spent in the park awaiting the coming of the lion, and the day in hunting up all his haunts, but without any success; he was nowhere to be found.

"You see," said Lakdar, "you have nothing to do but to come here and the lion runs away, and as soon as you go he will return, and then the rest of my cattle, and my wife and children will all follow the road that the first of my poor oxen have taken."

"You must take a wife and stay among us," said Lakdar's spouse, "we will show you the prettiest girls in the mountains; you can choose two or three for wives, our tribe will build you a house, and give you a herd of cattle, and then we will have peace in the land."

Without receiving Madame Lakdar's opinion as perfectly true, yet I will give the history of an occurrence that shows with what fatal determination a lion adheres to his predilection for some favorite camp or herd. There was once a mosque on the old road from Constantine to Batna that went by the name of Jema-el-Bechiva, and its ruined minarets exist to this day.

The holy men who inhabited this retreat had raised a young lion that was brought in by the Arabs, but after it had nearly attained its growth, the ungrateful scholar finding the path of religion a thorny road suddenly disappeared.

In a little while after, the douars that were located in the neighborhood of the mosque became the prey of his heretical appetite.

One evening the head of the holy fathers of Jema-el-Bechira was missing from prayers.

The next evening one of his assistants was found absent from his supper, a thing very unusual with a good mussulman.

So on for forty days, one by one the number of these wise men diminished gradually, the responses became fainter at prayers and the platters fewer at table. The lion lay in ambush by the brook, and when they came down to make their daily ablutions, they found their way into his infidel maw.

It was not until the fortieth professor had disappeared (a whole faculty devoured by a lion), that the ten of the faithful who remained took the better part of valor, and emigrated to a safer country, and the mosque was deserted.

Then the lion not having his stomach toned for the coarser fare of horse or beef, descended to the laity, and taking his post on the road, seized on every traveller that passed, until he had placed a perfect embargo on the route, and there was not an Arab, brave as he might be, that dare go over that road even in the daytime.

At last the lion growing melancholy in the perfect isolation that his predatory habits had imposed on himself, left the country probably in search of another mosque, and thenceforth the El-Bechiva road was travelled by every one in perfect security.

Since my arrival in the Mahouna country, I had seen great herds of wild hogs feeding in the forest, a sure sign that the lion was not in the neighborhood. Yet still I had not become a convert to Lakdar's opinion, that he had fled my

presence, but on the contrary I quietly waited for his return from what I supposed would be a short visit of pleasure or business.

One evening while seated in the garden, watching an old boar that was gradually rooting along the intervening distance, between the edge of the forest and fair rifle shot, Lakdar came running to tell me that the old black bull, the monarch of all the herd, had not come in at sunset with the rest of the cattle, which was strong evidence of the lion's having returned to his old haunt. Lakdar said that he would go out at early light the next day to see what had become of him. The next morning, after a long night's rest, such as comes to the light heart after a day's chase among the mountain, I opened my eyes and saw my host seated cross-legged before my bed, with his face radiant with pleasure.

"Come," he said, "I have found him."

In a quarter of an hour more we were standing contemplating the dead bull that lay in the middle of a tangled wood. The thigh and the breast had been eaten, the rest was still untouched, except by the destroyer's teeth, that had left a semicircle of marks on the black neck.

I sent Lakdar for some cakes and a flagon of water, and after he had brought them, I gave him leave of absence until the next morning, and took my post at the foot of a wild olive tree within three steps of the carcass. The woods were so thick that I could not see six steps ahead of me, but I carefully picked out the tracks the lion had made when leaving the place, so that I should know which way he would return. I then took off my turban and rolled it up out of the way that I might hear more distinctly, and sat myself down to the banquet of bull's meat that I all uninvited had come to share with the lion.

With the setting sun came forth to the world all the

animal life that peoples the night, hare, and lynx, and jackal, and the hundreds of little harlequins of the forest court, all unknown even by name to self proud men, sported each after his manner, in the faint light of the crescent moon. There was creaking in the trees, stirring amid the leaves and whispering of voices in that great family of nature, until the mind was wrought up to the most intense anxiety to decide what might be the laugh of a servant in the hall, or what the tread of the lordly host coming to his feast. It needed quick senses, or signs for life and death would be neglected; it needed a cool brain, or the strong and rapidly changing emotions that racked the mind and stilled the heart, would make one mad. At about eight in the evening, while a few slant rays of the moon came athwart the leaves, I heard the sharp crack of a stick in the distance.

There was no doubt in regard to this, nothing but the weight of a lion could have made that noise.

In a little while after a hollow, guttural roar grated on my ear, and then terminated in a full blast that made the darkness vibrate under the close thicket. Presently I could hear his slow heavy steps, as the animal walked leisurely along according to his custom when quitting his lair.

I waited with my elbow on my knee, and my rifle to my shoulder, until he should appear.

I did not see him until he was at the side of the carcass of the bull, slowly licking it with his huge tongue, and keeping his eyes fixed on me. I aimed for his forehead, as well as I could in the obscurity, and fired. The lion fell to the earth, and then with a roar he reared up on his hind legs like a horse.

I was on my feet at the same instant, and taking a step in advance, put my rifle to his head, and fired the second barrel.

This time he fell heavily without attempting to rise. /

stepped back a few paces to reload my rifle, then seeing the animal was still living, I walked up to him with my poniard, intending to finish him with a blow.

At this instant he raised his enormous head, and made a sweep with his paw. I sprang back in time to avoid the blow, and fired the death shot that laid him out motionless on the sod.

My first ball had entered an inch below the left eye, and gone out at the back of the head, and yet had not killed him.

While I was examining the grand beast, and meditating on his fate, a moment before the greatest lord in all Algeria, and now a moveless clod, I heard a great noise and shouting behind me. It was Lakdar running through the woods like a wild boar.

"It is I, Lakdar," he cried, all breathless with the exertion of pushing through the tangled bushes. "I was here—close by—listening—I heard all; he is dead—the infidel! the ogre! he is dead—the scourge! the devil!"

Then he laughed, and then talked to himself as he tugged through the underbrush, now scolding a thorn tree that caught his burnous, now denouncing the lion that had thinned his herds. Then he called his brother and his wife. "Come quick—bring the dogs and the children—he is dead—the slave!—he is dead!"

At last he came stumbling out to where I stood, saying, "Thank you, brother, for what you have done for me to-day; hereafter I am yours, soul and body; you can do with me and all I have, whatever you please."

"Look at that," I said, pointing to the lion, "is that your old friend?"

He seated himself in silence by the body, and examined it for some time, with the greatest attention.

Then he cried out, "Oh! villain, all the evil you have done me in your lifetime is as nothing, now that I can take you

by the mane, and slap your face," and suiting the action to the word, he went in with hearty good will, to what would have been a short fight, could the animal have recovered only a second of life.

We returned to the douar to pass the night, and on the morrow every man, woman, child and dog, that lived on the mountains, swarmed around Lakdar's douar, and filed into the woods where the lion was lying in state, on his leafy bier. In spite of this reinforcement of arms, the body was so heavy, and the woods so thick, that it was found impossible to move it from the place where it was lying, and we were obliged to skin it in the woods, which was done by willing hands, amid shouting and gestures and songs of victory.

Lakdar asked me, as a favor, to let him accompany me to Guelma, to enter the city with me as the bearer of the trophies. I consented, and he, to enjoy the delight of his triumph to its fullest extent, stretched the lion's skin on a mule, with the head in front, and then mounted himself in this novel saddle. The poor mule was the picture of the ass with the lion's skin, mentioned in the fables, and not only his brethren, far and near, shunned him as they would have done the plague, while they brayed sweet accompaniments to our march, but the poor beast himself, when by chance he looked askew, ran and capered, till Lakdar proved the experience of ages, that royalty's throne is no easy seat to maintain.

To give an idea of this size of the animal, I will mention that the strongest man in the squadron attempted to carry the head and skin on his shoulders into the presence of General Bedeau, who desired to see it, but the moment that the load was placed on his back, he sunk under the burden, and we were obliged to have it transported in a hand cart.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

SHOWING HOW MY COMRADE ROSTAIN BEARDED THE LION  
OF MEJEZ-AMAR.

TOWARDS the latter part of the month of December, a company of the foreign legion was sent to the camp of Mejez-Amar, a place about three leagues from Guelma, and in a few days, I heard from this out-post, that there was a lion that came every evening to the foot of the walls, to serenade the troops, and made night hideous with his music.

I set out immediately for the camp, taking with me a French spahi, named Rostain, who had been for a long time desirous of a lion hunt, and wanting, as he said, to take hold of a lion's beard. Several days passed by in idleness at the camp, while we waited to see or hear something of the lion that had so suddenly disappeared.

One evening we were sitting around the fire, quietly smoking our pipes, the Sheik Mustapha, Captain La Bedoyere, myself and some others. It was about ten o'clock, on a moonlight evening, when the walls of the building suddenly rattled under the roar of the lion, that sounded just outside the gates.

I snatched up my gun, that was standing by my bed, and hurried out, calling to the captain to keep Rostain from following me. I had scarcely got clear of the camp, when I heard the lion roaring again on the other side of the brook that ran by the side of the fort. I hastened in the direction

of the sound, forded the river, and climbed on the opposite bank, to try and catch sight of the animal. I had scarcely reached the further shore, when Rostain came after me, wading through the water in the same manner that I had done.

I have very little confidence in those men who declare they are never afraid, and pretend they can do more than any one else, yet when I saw the spahi so resolutely dash through the water, that might well have stopped a horseman, and quietly take his place at my side, I formed a better opinion of the man, in spite of my prejudices. So I greeted him with a hearty good will, telling him that in a few minutes he would have the chance he so much desired, and might *beard the lion* if he chose.

My promise was kept, for a moment after I caught sight of his majesty, standing in dignified silence on the open road, watching our motions. The moon was at its full, and showed the animal in all his proportions, as I pointed him out to the spahi.

"That a lion!" he said, "why that's a bull broken loose from the herds."

At this moment, the lion, as if to dispel any doubt in our minds, in regard to his identity, raised his voice, and roared in a manner that made my companion at once renounce all his projects of pulling his beard, and he prayed me to return at once to the camp, since the lion had the goodness not to attack us.

I know many a man in Rostain's place that would have concealed his terror, and relying upon my assistance, have endeavored to have led the attack, impelled by personal vanity and the fear of what their comrades would say, which is the great main-spring of cowardly minds. My comrade was a bold man, and had only made the common mistake of judging the lion in his native wilds, by his brother in confinement,

but he had the courage at once to acknowledge his error. I was pleased with this frankness, and mentally resolved to protect my friend from every danger in the coming conflict, at the expense, if needs be, of my own life.

"Come," I said, "let us go a little nearer and take a look at the gentleman."

As we approached, the lion crouched down across the road, as though to bar our passage. I left Rostain at about thirty paces from him, and continued walking up.

I would ask those who believe in the universal clemency and kind-heartedness of the lion, what were the inclinations of this one, who, when two men, with arms glittering in the moonshine, were walking towards him, quietly crouched down in the road to stop their way?

When within twenty paces, I halted, where I could get a shot at his side, but like a cat at play, he wheeled face about, lying close to the earth, and only showing me the oblique surface of his head.

The attitude of the animal being so hostile and wary, I thought it unsafe to hazard a shot which might merely glance along the skull, without penetrating it, and therefore moved around to his side, keeping always at the same distance. When I attained a position that I thought sufficiently good, I took aim again, but the lion, as before, wheeled around, calculating in his own mind whether he should spring upon me or not.

Fully comprehending the extent of the danger in continuing these tactics, I slowly moved a little to one side, sighting the animal all the while over my rifle, and before he had time to wheel, I fired at his shoulder.

At the shot, he attempted to spring forward; a broken shoulder prevented him, and he fell on his side, and while struggling to regain his feet, I gave him the other barrel.

Rostain, seeing the animal had fallen, ran forward towards

where I was standing, but at the moment that he came up, the lion raised himself on his legs, and gave a roar that startled me by its fierceness. My gun was empty, and I seized the spahi's from his hand, and walking forward two or three steps, fired just behind his shoulder, hoping to reach the heart. The lion fell, as before, but immediately was on his feet again.

We were now without any means of defence, save my poniard, a feeble weapon against an animal that had not been killed by three balls.

I had stood hand to hand with death so often, that I did not fear for myself, but I thought it was all over with Rostain and me that night. When alone in these kind of battles, I could have met my death as an incident of the chase, without uttering a complaint; but here I was troubled with the presence of another, that seemed to give me care, without any additional strength. I looked around for some place of retreat, and saw a large wild jujube-tree or thicket, growing a little distance behind us, so I bade my comrade run, and we were fortunate enough to gain its protection, for the lion was not able either to run or to bound, but could only drag himself after us with difficulty.

The jujube in question was about ten feet in diameter, and very close set, and the branches were so studded with thorns, that the lion did not attempt to force a passage through, but contented himself with following us around the bush, while we loaded as we ran.

The wounded animal, after making one circuit, staggering all the while like a drunken man, finally laid himself down, expressing by his growls his feelings towards us, in no very re-assuring manner.

We took advantage of this truce, and while Rostain kept watch, I finished reloading my gun, making as little noise as possible, and at the same time charging the gun carefully,

that there might be no danger of a miss-fire in so desperate an emergency. When the last cap was placed on the cones, I felt relieved of an impending fate. We then moved back a short distance from the jujube, to avoid any surprise, and walked slowly towards the place where the lion had laid down, but he had left it, and there was nothing to be seen of him.

Had the animal, not seeing or hearing us any more, gone to seek us? I thought it prudent not to wait to resolve the question. If he could get up and move out of sight in spite of our three balls, it was certain that in case we suddenly came upon him in the obscurity, he would make us pay dear for our fun.

I resolved, therefore, to go into camp and wait until daylight should show us our game. After examining the place where he had fallen, and noticing the pool of blood that marked the spot, we regained our camp, taking care to keep always on the open ground, and at a wary distance from every thicket.

The next morning with the early dawn we were in the field, hastening towards the scene of the evening's encounter, accompanied by the Sheik Mustapha and a number of Arabs.

For more than a half hour we followed the track by the blood the animal had left in his flight, without ever losing the continuous trail. It seemed almost incredible that an animal could bleed so much and still be able to move. Wherever the bushes were thick, he had marked them on both sides of his path, a sure sign that he had been pierced through and through, and judging from the height of these marks from the ground, the shots had taken effect directly behind the shoulder.

Presently the trail led into a thicket of wild olive trees, that appeared a suitable cover for him to have taken refuge in, and the Arabs stayed behind until I satisfied myself by walking around the jungle, that the trail led no further, and

that dead or alive, the lion must be there. I then posted the Arabs in different groups around the thicket, and took my position where I judged he would most likely come out, relying upon his habit of charging a single individual rather than a number together.

At a given signal, the Arabs gave a loud hurrah, and waving their burnous, threw stones into the thicket, and hied on their dogs, that immediately disappeared in the underbrush.

We stood in breathless silence for some minutes, awaiting the result. No movement was seen, or noise heard, in answer to our salute ; and supposing the animal dead, I was about to return to the trail to follow it up to the body, when suddenly, with a howl, out came the pack of dogs, with their tails between their legs, and their hair on end, in grand rout. The Arabs, not waiting any longer to see the cause of this discomfiture, but well knowing what was coming, took flight like the dogs.

In a moment after, I saw the lion cautiously coming out of the thicket, and taking the very path where Rostain was posted. I called to him, but before I could make him hear, the animal was within ten steps of him, and the spahi losing his reason at the fierce bearing of his foe, dropped his gun and fled, only instead of running up the hill as the Arabs had done, he conceived the fatal idea of turning down the declivity to hide in the scattered woods at its base.

The moment the lion caught sight of the fugitive, he gave chase, with his mane ruffled and his tail in the air, and with every jump he roared with the full blast of his lungs. Each leap he made he staggered, but regaining his feet in an instant, he pursued his course with a fearful earnestness.

At the first glance at this chase, I knew that it was all over with Rostain, though I ran with all my speed to his aid. As the animal crossed a little opening in the woods at forty

paces from me, I fired a shot that struck him in the side and brought him to a halt. Had Rostain availed himself of this pause, he would have been saved, but he must needs stop to see the effect of my shot. Seeing the lion recover himself and charging anew, he again endeavored to flee. His foot caught a root and he fell; before he could regain his feet, the lion was upon him, and seizing him in his jaws, the man and beast rolled down the hill together.

In spite of the close woods that grew at the foot of the hill, I was by Rostain's side in a moment after he had been seized. He was lying motionless in a pool of blood. The lion had disappeared, leaving him for dead. Nevertheless, he still breathed, and I hurriedly examined the upper part of the body which I found to be unhurt. The four incisors of the angry lion had pierced his thigh like so many bullets, and sixteen deep long gashes from his claws, furrowed his back.

I called for the Arabs to come to my aid, but they were all afraid to descend the hill, so I picked up the wounded man, and carried him on my shoulder to the level plain. The rest of the day and the following night I spent at his side, trying to assuage his pains, and awaiting the arrival of Dr. Gresloy, who had been summoned to come from Guelma to our relief.

The next morning I returned to the chase, taking with me a large number of Arabs to help me beat up the bushes for the wounded animal, or to find his body in case he was dead, this was the third day I had been hunting this one lion.

After taking up the trail where it had left the unfortunate spahi, we followed it for about four hundred yards, until it entered a thicket on the bank of the Bou-Hemdem. On the other side of this river extended a close swamp, called by the Arabs the woods of El-Bhar.

When I had satisfied myself that the lion was ambushed in his copse, I divided my forces and prepared for a hard

battle, well knowing that the nearer he was to death, the more dangerous he would be when disturbed. There were two paths by which the river might be crossed, and I knew that the lion would take one or the other to get into the heavier woods beyond. Therefore, I placed five Arabs on the lower ford, stationing them on the further bank where they would have a fair shot at the enemy while wading the river, and I guarded the upper ford. I then directed the larger body of the Arabs that had remained behind to make a great noise to rouse the lion, and to advance towards the river, beating up the bushes as they came.

I had hardly reached my post when the natives gave a yell that would have awakened the dead.

The lion did not stir. Then they set up a great shout, "He is dead! The rascal, the Jew, the Kaffir, he is dead!" and they all marched gaily forward with a triumphal step. Presently one of the Arabs came right upon the lion, crouched under a mastic bush. Frightened by the grim apparition, he fired his shot, and took to his heels with the lion after him, but the animal not being able to make a quick movement in his disabled state, the man got off with his fright, and some rather inglorious scratches behind.

A moment after, another Arab encountered the lion, face to face. The man at first preserved his courage, and with one knee to the earth took aim at his opponent. The lion in turn crouched down like a cat and waited. Up to that instant the game had been well played, but unfortunately the Arab's heart failed him, he turned his head to see if there was any one behind to support him, and the lion, seeing the motion, fell on him like an avalanche.

With a single stroke of his paw he tore away his cheek and broke the stock of the gun, and the hand that held it. The man was felled to the earth by the blow, and the lion

taking him in his mouth, gave him two or three shakes and then tossed him head first in the bushes ten steps off.

Next came along an Arab with a musket and bayonet who sent his ball at the animal, but the lion made a fish-hook of the bayonet, by the same blow that he sent the man senseless into the bushes, that bordered the wayside. It was done with the same ease that a man would push a stone out of his path. Then seeing the way clear, and the water running bright before him, he started off for the woods of El-Bhar by the ford where I had posted the Arabs.

As long as he remained on the opposite bank, my brave men stood firmly at their post, shoulder to shoulder, with their long barrels gleaming at the foe they were resolved to conquer or to die. But the moment that the lion dashed into the water with his mane on end, murmuring low thunder, they vacated the ground with a most admirable unanimity. The lion then crossed over on the very path on which they had been standing, and disappeared in the woods.

The ford that I was watching was so far up the stream that I could not reach the place until too late to do any good, although I learned from the Arabs, that the lion walked on three legs, and staggered very badly as he went into the woods.

I signalled to the Arabs to advance, and was about following up the trail when a messenger came to me, to say that the litter to carry Rostain to Guelma had arrived, and that, suffering very much, he wanted me to go with him. I hastened to his side, and accompanied the slow moving cortege that bore him and the two wounded Arabs, until it arrived safely at Guelma.

The next day I came back to Mejez-Amar and the wounded lion, and for ten consecutive days we beat up and down the woods where the royal beast had laid down to die,

without finding him, or any signs of his body. At last I saw the vultures sailing aloft in the dim air, slowly circling over the woods. Gradually they narrowed the orbit of their flight, and sank down lower, and lower, to a particular part of the jungle. They told the tidings clearer than words, the wounded lion was dead.

The hunter's mission was now accomplished, I left to the Arabs the task of finding the body, and returned home.

The two Arabs who were hurt, recovered from their wounds, thanks to their thick burnous and the weakly condition of the lion, but Rostain only came out after eight months' siege in the hospital, and a season passed at the springs of Amam-Scontin, and when he appeared again among his fellows, he wore a wooden leg that he sometimes pointed at to prove how he had bearded the lion of Mejez-Amar.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE DUCHESS OF ORLEANS, AND MY LION-HUNTING BRIGADE.

My health already undermined by the emotions and privations of my venturesome life, was still more broken by the sad disasters at this last hunt, so I asked for, and obtained, a leave of absence for France.

After a month had been passed in the arms of my family, that was leading its round of happy retirement in a country village, I came on to Paris.

I have recounted my reception by my friends at Paris in a former part of this work, when tracing the history of Hubert. And I cannot again recur to that period without recalling to my mind the many warm congratulations that came to me from friends I had never before met, and that were accompanied by so many marks of a profound regard. In making the acquaintance of so much that was artificial at Paris, I thought the more highly of those spirits that could live on in the hollow and fictitious life of the capital, and still have hearts unspoiled and uncorroded by the soft pleasures and corruptions of the city.

I availed myself of my present sojourn in Paris, to urge on a measure, the character of which I will briefly delineate.

I have before spoken in these pages of the losses that are sustained by the Arabs of Algeria from the ravages of the lion, and I had felt so sincerely for the hardships of their

situation, that I had devised a means for their relief—a means more lasting than my own individual life, and that would draw down on our people the eternal gratitude of the Arab. This plan was simply an organization similar to the one that has been instituted in many parts of France, to free the country from wolves, and such an institution devoted to lion hunting was my project and ambition.

The plan was perfectly simple. I would have enrolled volunteers taken from the infantry regiments in Africa, also a number of native Arabs, and with them formed a complete corps of *chasseurs* under the army regulations, with myself at their head as their leader. This body of men should be at the service of the commanders of provinces or districts wherever there was need of them, to hunt and kill a lion.

I estimated that this organization would cost about twenty-five thousand francs a year to the province of Constantine, which province loses at the present time about two hundred thousand francs a year by the ravages of the lion.

The tribes that principally suffer from the attacks of these devastators would most readily defray, not only the original expense of the organization, but also the annual costs of the company, and I do not hesitate to say, that there never has been a foreign squadron hailed with such enthusiasm and gratitude, as would be a company like the one I propose.

I had made so many friends in Paris among those in authority, that my plan was immediately taken into consideration, and accepted, and would have been carried out had it not been for the revolution of 1848, that interrupted all the machinery of the government. So I had to remain Poor Jack, as before, with only the remembrance of the good I intended to have done to console me, and the arms I had received from the young Count de Paris, to carry out the

work I had begun. There are some gifts where the manner of tendering them, doubles their value. I would be ungrateful did I not here mention with what touching grace these arms were offered to me.

On the day of my presentation at the Tuileries, the Duchess of Orleans, whose triple title of princess, woman, and widow, excited my more than ordinary regard, gave me a private audience in her apartments. Her greeting, so full of a woman's tenderness and royal grace, moved me to tears.

After having for a little time turned the conversation upon African topics, and hunting adventures, at the recital of which she more than once trembled for the conqueror, as she graciously remarked ; she led me to her two boys, the Duke de Chartres and the Count de Paris, and prayed me to give them the history, in its minutest particulars, of the death of the lion whose skin I had presented to her, which was the great red lion of the Mahounah. I obeyed the duchess, and told my tale to listening ears.

When I had finished the story, which seemed to make a great impression upon my young auditors, judging from the many emotions which by turn lit up their countenances, particularly when I told how the lion in his death struggles, after my shots were all spent, broke my poniard in his side, the Count de Paris abruptly left the room.

In a moment after, he came back to me with a case in his hand, saying :

"Monsieur Gerard, you run great dangers, and those wicked -beasts will some day play you a bad trick. So good a hunter must be a good soldier, and we will want to keep you in the army. You have a sword and gun, you still need pistols, therefore take these of mine, and may they be of use to you in your hour of need."

I forgot the prince, and only recognized the kind heart that dictated the action as I pressed the hand he extended

to me. The duchess, who had kept silent through the whole scene, drew the boy to her knee, and covered him with kisses and tears.

Before I left Paris I received from M. Adolphe d' Houde tot, a superb rifle, that he had ordered made by Devisme, expressly for the chase of the lion.

This remarkable gun had two chambered barrels twenty-five and one-half inches in length. The bore was of number fifty-two gauge, cut with a progressive twist like the carbines of the Chasseurs of Vincennes. The manner of loading it is the same. The ball is conical in shape, and pointed with steel for about half its length. This gives it great power of penetration, and it will pierce the hardest substances. The rifle weighed seven pounds and twelve ounces.

At the same time Devisme gave me a beautiful double edge poniard of pure steel, with a blade a foot long, and a hand's breadth in width. In his turn Mooutier Lepage gave me a double barrel rifle, as carefully finished as the other, and made expressly for my use. It was twenty-two inches in length, of number sixty-two gauge, and of the same pattern as has since been chosen for the Hundred Guards of his majesty the emperor. The nine spiral grooves make one turn in twenty-seven and one-half inches, and the ball is cylindrical conical, and weighs two hundred and twenty-five grains.

When I tried these guns for the first time with Monseieur Devisme and Monsieur Lepage, either in their galleries or at Vincennes, I was astonished at their power of penetration. The ball with a steel point pierced a cast iron plate a third of an inch in thickness, while the leaden bullet pierced an oak plank nine inches thick. With these weapons, the best that could be made for lion hunting, I returned to Africa in the year 1848 to resume my old course of life, that seemed to me the pleasanter from its contrast to Parisian gaieties.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## A LION HUNT AMONG THE NATIVES OF CONSTANTINE.

AFTER my return to Africa I was attached to the Government Office, and was therefore obliged to give up my old quarters at Guelma and reside at Constantine.

In this part of the country some tribes still hunt the lion, as it might be called, by *assault*, a royal chase that is far superior to every other method, and those that engage in it play for heavy stakes.

They go in a body of thirty or forty men, to find the lion in his lair, and irritate him until he comes out, not to flee, but to attack the disturbers of his rest. The Arabs remain in a body, and when the lion is within ten steps of them they fire all at once, but in spite of this hail storm of lead, eight times out of ten the animal is not killed at the shot, but dashes on his foes, and thrashing about in the living mass dies under many blows, and not unavenged.

In the south of Constantine when a lion has ravaged a particular section of the country for a long time, and has apparently fixed himself for life in some neighboring mountain, the people come forth to give him battle. The day is fixed by the men in authority, and a given place is designated for the meet. The horsemen take their position on the plain at the base of the mountain, and the footmen, in companies of twenties, climb the hill towards the lairs with loud

hurrahs. At the first cry, the lion, if he is not an adult, or the lioness, if she is without young, comes boldly out of the cover and commences the action.

If by chance it is an old lion that they have roused, he awakens from his lethargic slumbers at the first sound, and yawning, stretches himself like a lazy dog that has been awakened too soon. Then catching the full cry that comes with the morning wind, and knowing from his own experience or by family tradition, the meaning of the tumult, he rubs himself backward and forward against a tree, stopping from time to time to wrinkle his broad forehead, or raise his tawny mane, ever and anon throwing up his head and catching the tainted breeze that stirs among the underwood. Then he slowly quits the cover, and selecting some high flat rock that overlooks the country, and from whence he can watch the tactics of his enemies, he stretches himself down, and examines the approaching hordes that the mists of early morning half conceal, half disclose.

The Arab who first sees him, calls out, "There he goes."

The call given by one man in the midst of so many cries and hurrahs, is heard and understood by all. The cries are hushed as if by magic, and thereafter it is only the voice of the lord of the mountain that is heard, overawing all the rest.

The groups of Arabs who are within sight come to a halt and gaze in silence upon the king on his throne of rock, and those that are further off, hasten to where they can see him. Then follows a long silence. The Arabs examine their guns, and renew their primings, and the lion with his huge paws combs out his mane, and makes his morning toilette.

Finally, an Arab comes out from one of the groups, and says :

"You don't know us, or you would not remain seated there.

Rise and fly, for we are of such a tribe, and I am so and so. son of such a warrior!"

The lion who has probably stripped the skin off of many a native while talking just such nonsense, scarcely regards the speaker, but continues to smooth down his face with his paws, and make himself handsome.

Then another orator steps out from the ranks, keeping always at a prudent distance, and gives another oration which falls alike unheard. After this come the usual epithets of Jew, Christian and Infidel, and every one cries and shouts until there is such a tumult that the lion, disgusted with the profanation of his retirement, rises from the ground, lashes his flanks with his flail-like tail, and marches right at his foes, and the battle is begun, that will redden more than one mountain slope, before the hunters see again their douars.

As the lion walks calmly down the hill, the more timid fly as best they may; the bolder slowly retreat in order, towards the plain, where the horsemen are waiting to cover their flanks. Some, who have only come that they might say, we were there, are perched in trees, or on inaccessible rocks. On every side are heard yells and groans and menaces, as with the same royal carriage, the lion slowly marches down the hill.

The cavalry, seeing the chase, approach and put themselves in movement. They wheel and fly, waving their burnous, and brandishing their arms, while the tramp of feet, the neighing of horses, and the battle cry of the tribe, make fierce music for the combat. Suddenly the horses, that a moment before were flying like sand-clouds, come to a halt, with dilated nostrils, and quivering ears, while the great voice of the lion rolls down the hill, they catch his wind, and stand shivering with fear. The lion, seeing the crowds that are awaiting him, lies down to keep the advantage of his position, and refuses to advance.





"The rout of the Arabs is immediate and universal. Some of those posted in the trees, send their balls at him in his pursuit, the cavaliers advance, and the lion again crouches down, holding some unlucky wight, whose legs were not as quick as his fears, under his gigantic paw. Another shot, and another charge, until the lion, finding himself fatigued by this desultory mode of warfare, takes a position that he will not quit with his life."—Page 365.

The cries and provocations are disregarded, something stronger must be tried to make him move. The hunters consult, and hesitate, until at last an old man steps out, who, if he has not been wounded on some former battle, at least has some relative to revenge, and he speaks :

“ Young men—all of you who care for your fortunes, your families, or your heads, you can go to your tents.”

Although there are a great many who value these necessities of life, and would much prefer to be safely under their tents, yet no one moves. The Arab who would leave at such a moment, would be dishonored forever. The old man then takes a few steps in advance, he proudly throws back his burrous, and after taking aim for about five minutes, fires. The ball goes skipping along wide of the mark, but the lion now thoroughly indignant, springs to his feet; he no longer walks, but charges headlong.

The rout of the Arabs is immediate and universal. Some of those posted in the trees, send their balls at him in his pursuit, the cavaliers advance, and the lion again crouches down holding some unlucky wight, whose legs were not as quick as his fears, under his gigantic paw. Another shot, and another charge, until the lion finding himself fatigued by this desultory mode of warfare, take a position that he will not quit but with his life.

He pays no attention to the balls and insults that they hurl at him from a distance, but when the crowd gradually approach, when shoulder to shoulder the long lines of Arabs march up to closer quarters, while the snorting horses are following close behind, when the iron tubes are all leveled at the one target, and the single foe finds his enemy within reach, he makes a prodigious bound at the living wall. The guns belch forth their flame and ball, and under the canopy of smoke that hangs in the still air, the royal beast rages and tears, until he lies down on a pile of human flesh, and struggling horses, and dies like a king, as he lived.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## A DOUBLE SHOT AMONG THE LIONS OF ZERAZER.

HAVING been sent on duty to the south of the province of Constantine, in the latter part of the month of January, 1848, I nightly heard the stories of the chase, like the one I have just given, with many a remark upon my own exploits, the fame of which had come from Guelma and Bone, and which the good natured natives had the frankness to say they utterly disbelieved.

How is it possible, they said, that one man, alone, in the night time can slay the same animal that receives twenty-five balls in his body without being killed, and, even when we hunt with horsemen at our backs, in the open day, never lets us off without severe losses.

I told them it was very easy, that when the lions came to me I waited for them, and when they did not, I went to them. They replied that in *that* case, the lions at Guelma were *very* goodnatured.

I sought the opportunity to join in a hunt, and give the incredulous natives a proof that the Frenchmen were better hunters than Arabs could ever hope to be. The task would be an easy one here, as I would have a comparatively open country, and daylight in which to accomplish that which I had often done in the dark forest, and so I sent for my arms that I had left at Constantine, and went down to pay a visit

to the Zmouls that inhabit the country around Moun. Zerazer, a place constantly frequented by lions.

For some days after my arrival, a drizzling rain obscured the mountains, and I remained in my tent occupied with the duties of the government that had brought me from Constantine. On the first of February, two fractions of the tribe of Seguia came in to join in the chase that was to take place on the morrow.

I directed them to detail men enough to hunt the woods through with the early light, and whenever they should find that the lion was marked down, they should give a signal by lighting a fire to serve as a rallying point. The remainder of the day I spent in going over the mountain so as to have a perfect knowledge of the country. I found the hills to be long and precipitous, with the eastern side falling abruptly off, and the western cut up with gullies and copse wood.

The next day was clear, and the tropical sun as it rose glinted on a broad sheet of snow that had robed the hills on yesterday. At three o'clock in the morning the village was awake for the foray, the simple breakfast had been eaten, and the men of the tribe were scouring their arms, or girding up their loins for the combat. Dogs barked, cattle lowed, the women called, and shout answered to shout, and neigh to neigh as the swarthy riders, one by one swung themselves into the saddle, and the whole party swooped out of the enclosure on the open plain, and sped forward to the mountain. By my side rode Amar-ben-Taieb the Sheik of the Ouled Sassi, and Mohammed-ben-Ghenem the Sheik of the Ouled-Achour, who were each to command their respective tribes for the day, while the whole force was under my general direction.

We rode for an hour along the base of the hills towards the south, until we saw a column of smoke rising slowly from a rock like a sentinel. As we approached we saw the Arabs

shaking their burnous ; this was the signal that they had found a lion.

Seeing a native keeping watch at a little distance from the fire on the ridge of the hill, I directed my steps to him, and as I followed the direction of his hand, that he silently pointed to the earth, I saw the fresh tracks of three lions.

It is said, that *sin once acknowledged is half pardoned*.

If so, 'tis fortunate for me, for at that moment I was proud when I saw in the snow, on the one side, the trail of three lions, and on the other forty men of the country armed to the teeth. And I was pleased when I overlooked the assemblage not to find one among the multitude dressed in any manner like myself. There was nothing so neat as the spahi uniform I wore, or the poniard that glittered at my belt, my only defence in the hand to hand battle that was always likely to occur.

The Arab who had at first pointed out to me the tracks, had followed me in silence as I traced their course. In turning my head I noticed on his countenance a mocking air that seemed to say, "There are three, how do you like that my fine fellow?"

"They are young," I said, "I wish they had been old ones."

He made a wry face, and went back to tell the party what I had said. Having reached a plateau, I discovered a resting place that the lions had quitted only a short time, and then they appeared to have entered a copse near by, that seemed a very suitable place in which they might lay concealed.

I ordered the two tribes to follow the crest of the rocks that formed a sort of rampart to the Zerazer country, as far as the last rock that overlooked the plain. Having reached the northern point, they were to sweep the two slopes of the hills, the tribe of Ouled Sassi, the better hunters, the western slope, where I supposed the lions were concealed, and the Ouled-Achour, the eastern slope. Each tribe was to detail

two men to follow the ridges, to regulate the progress of the hunt, and some sentinels to communicate with me, and the whole of the force was to march towards the south, making a great noise, but without firing a gun. In case the lions should show themselves, the cries were to cease, and the burnous of the videttes to be waved.

Having regulated the operations of the hunters, I took my seat on a rock on the plateau, the numerous tracks of lions beneath the thin snow making me believe that this was their customary path. Having placed my two followers on a rock where they could see everything without being exposed to danger, I placed my two rifles by my side and patiently awaited the result.

Soon the northerly wind bore to my ears a long hurrah from the ridge of the hills, and fixed my attention on the sentinels posted on the different eminences within sight. Then came the cry, "There he goes, there he goes," repeated from lip to lip, now faint, and now clear, so that there was no mistake, the lion was coming.

I waited for about an hour, listening for some other call or sign to know what was passing, when a gazel appeared on the ridge of the little plateau I was guarding. She looked over her shoulder, and then dashed down, and passing within ten feet of the place where I stood without noticing me, was immediately lost to sight. I looked the way she came to see the meaning of her flight, and heard the rolling of stones and heavy steps on the other side of the ridge, and at once recognized the step of a lion that had been separated from his companions, and was coming directly towards me. I was concealed behind a little bush by the same mountain path the gazel had followed, and I expected he would come out close by me. While waiting with my gun to my shoulder for his appearance, a loud scream came to me from behind, and turning round, I saw the lion had passed me out of sight

and was standing at the foot of the rock, gazing up at my two armor-bearers, who were in the anticipation of immediate death.

The distance was about forty paces, and I fired without hesitation, aiming for the shoulder. The lion fell at the report of my gun, but immediately regained his feet, when another ball struck him in the side. He gave one roar that threw the two Arabs into convulsions of fear, and then sprang over a sheer precipice of fifty feet in height with a single bound, and the dark ravine below received his last struggles.

The Ouled Sassi had reached the ridge overlooking the plateau, at the moment I fired my first shot, and had seen the lion make his grand leap into the Hades below. They came running along the rocks, leaping like chamois from ledge to ledge, and I had great difficulty in preventing them from going into the ravine in search of the wounded beast, who would have made bloody work in that narrow gorge, if by chance he had a moment's breath to spare.

I had hardly reloaded my rifle when the sentinels called out as loud as they could yell, "Two lions are up in front of the Ouled-Achour."

There was no time to lose, the lion I had shot could not well get out of the ravine even if alive, and so we all rushed off, pell-mell, on the new scent. When we reached the other slope of the mountain, we found the Ouled-Achour had fled from their foes, and the lions could nowhere be found, though we spent the whole day in the search.

On the next morning it rained, and we watched with anxious eyes all day, the flying scud through the curtains of our tents. The following morning, however, shone out with the accustomed brightness of African skies, and its earliest light found me on the mountain, guarding the same plateau as before, and mounted on a rock where I could command a better view. From here I saw a lioness coming down the

nills by the same path the lion had followed on the previous day. I kept still until she was within thirty paces, when I arose with my gun to my shoulder, and she halted. She gave an anxious glance over her shoulder, and then showed me her teeth, hissing like a cat, and tossing her head.

I took aim at her shoulder, and fired. With the explosion of the gun, she doubled up like a snake, and then with all her strength bounded at me, but before she could make a second leap, my remaining ball struck her in the nape of the neck, and she fell dead.

The Arabs came running from every side at my double shot, and when they saw the dead lioness at my feet, they knelt one by one, to kiss the hand that had given them a lesson never to be forgotten.

I sent the body of this lioness to Constantine, and the one that I had shot two days previous, we drew out of the ravine for home consumption. Nevertheless, we could not be contented without the third lion that we had flushed, and the next day I was on his trail, with all the Arabs at my side, who would have willingly hunted with me as long as there was a lion left in Africa.

We followed the same tactics we had before employed, and succeeded in starting a lioness of the same age as the one I had killed on the yesterday, but she kept to the covers so closely, that it was impossible to bring her to battle. That evening she was seen travelling towards Bou-Aziz, and thinking she would not wish, after such a chase, to visit the Zerazer again, I returned to Constantine.

In January, 1850, I was summoned by the same people to come to their help against the mighty, as two lions had emigrated from Aures, and since their arrival there had been nothing but rapine and vexation of spirit.

The morning after I reached the Zerazer I was standing on the high plateau of the mountain, while ten Arabs bea:

up the ridge on one side, and ten on the other, having agreed to come together on the highest point of the range.

The trackers on the northerly side found nothing but old spoors snowed under, but their comrades, more fortunate, came upon the very lair of the lions. Astonished at being awakened at so unseasonable an hour, they got up from their beds, and finding the prudent Arabs had placed themselves beyond all reach, they took to another cover, grumbling very much in their own language at this annoyance.

The Sheik of the Seguians who was with me in the hunt, and came up to tell me what had been discovered, said that the lions were brothers, and that one seemed to protect the other, and was constantly showing fight. We started right off for, but did not reach their lair until the afternoon. The Arabs who were standing sentinel around, told me that they were still there, and that one had showed himself several times outside of the bushes as though anxious for revenge. After having placed the officer of the Arab bureau, who had accompanied me, in a place of safety, I ordered all the natives to leave and keep out of sight, retaining one near me to carry my arms.

The ruse succeeded admirably.

The moment that the Arabs disappeared behind the rocks on the brow of the hill, a lion showed himself on the edge of the copse, and after looking all around him, and seeing me alone with only a single man behind me, he came directly towards me. After him his brother came out of the copse, and followed on about fifty steps behind, both marching boldly to the place where I was posted, carrying their heads high in air.

I had taken my seat on a knoll which overlooked the place, and that was easily attainable by ledges of rock in front, that sloped up to where I sat. The Arab was behind me holding my Lepage gun that I had cocked and put into





"I snatched the other gun from the trembling Arab, and before the lion could make another leap, which infallibly would have hurled him upon me, a bullet had passed through his brain. The muscles of his face quivered, his great hands gradually relaxed their hold of the rock, and he fell back dead."—PAGE 373.

his hands, with strict injunctions to hand it to me the moment I had fired my two other shots. I held my Devisme rifle to my shoulder, awaiting the action of my foes.

The first lion came on without halting, until he reached the lowest step of rock and had leaped upon it, he then turned an instant to look for his comrade.

This movement presented his shoulder to me, and without waiting an instant, I fired. He fell at the shot, struggled to rise, and fell again. He had both shoulders broken.

The second lion, hearing the report of my gun, and seeing the fall of his comrade, bounded forward, roaring in his loudest tones, his mane and tail waving from side to side, in his rapid course. As he passed his brother he paused for a second, as if to inquire what was the matter, but that halt was fatal to him, for at the instant my second bullet passed through his body just behind his shoulder.

He fell by the side of the first victim, but recovering himself in a trice, made a wonderful bound that carried him to the very rock on which I was sitting.

I snatched the other gun from the trembling Arab, and before the lion could make another leap, which infallibly would have hurled him upon me, a bullet had passed through his brain. The muscles of his face quivered, his great hands gradually relaxed their hold of the rock, and he fell back dead.

The remaining ball gave the *coup de grace* to the wounded animal that had been first shot, and the greatest hunt that had ever gathered on the Zerazer was ended.

The day after, the officers of the garrison at Constantine feasted on lions' meat, while the mess-room was hung with the beautiful robes of the fallen kings.

## CHAPTER XXX.

▲ NEW KIND OF LION'S BAIT—VERY ATTRACTIVE, BUT  
DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.

It was in the month of August, a warm month in Algeria, that I heard there was a large old lion in the country of the Smouls.

I went immediately there, and learned on my arrival that he had changed his quarters, and taken up his residence in the mountain of Bou-Aziz near Batna. I had hardly pitched my tent at the base of this mountain, before I discovered that he had already quitted it, and the natives brought me word he was ravaging their herds at Fedj-Louj, where on arriving, I learned he had left the day previous for Aures.

After having followed this interminable traveller a hundred leagues, without ever seeing anything more of him than his tracks, I at last heard him roaring in the valley of Ourten about a league from Krenchela.

Only one path led through this valley, and I immediately found the tracks of my friend, and followed them to his lair. Not finding the master at home, I returned in the evening accompanied by a spahi and a native; the one with my spare rifle, and the other with my old carbine, and we posted ourselves along the path that led to his retreat.

As I had anticipated, with the setting of the sun the lion commenced roaring, giving notice to all concerned that he was going out for the night, but instead of coming towards

us he took an opposite direction, and walked so fast that I could not overtake him.

I came back to my post where I had left my two men about midnight, and feeling very much fatigued selected a thick-set tree by the side of the path, and laid down for a nap, bidding my spahi keep a good watch until I awoke. The Arab stretched himself out at a little distance, and in a few minutes was snoring like a windmill.

It was a night of perfect beauty. The full moon poured down a flood of silver that rolled off the trees, and lay knee deep on all the fields of grain, and grassy knolls. Here and there a cultivated patch of ground showed its fruitful breast amid the woods, margined with the stately trees of ages ago. The air was warm and fresh, the wind was whist, and no sound met the ear, save the murmur of insects in the air, or the bumping of beetles as their shardy wing came against the white barked trees. The shadows lay heavily under the foliage where we were stationed, though the Arab slept in the full moonshine that gleamed on his burnous white as snow. I saw for a while around me the pleasant view dissolving away in the mists of sleep, when I felt my arm gently pulled by my spahi. I slowly raised my head, and following his eye saw on the pathway at about a hundred paces from us, two lions sitting down side by side.

I thought at first that we had been discovered, and was preparing to fire away as best I could, but then again I reflected that we were in the shadows, partly concealed by the bushes, while the happy native was lying in the full light of the moon. It was evident it was he they were watching. I forbade my comrade to awaken him, persuaded that he would be proud of his share in the adventure after it was over, and carefully raising to my feet, stood behind the trunk of the tree to watch the operations of the enemy.

The distance between me and them was only a hundred

yards, and yet they must have taken a full half hour to cross the intervening distance. The moon was shining bright on the path, but I could only see them from time to time, as they raised their heads to see if the Arab remained always in the same place. They took advantage of every tuft of grass, and every stone to conceal their approach, gliding rather than crawling, and winding like snakes among stones or over sticks without the slightest noise.

At last the leader had come within ten paces of where I was standing, and to within fifteen steps of where the Arab was snoring, and his eyes were fixed upon the sleeping man with such a concentration of desire that I feared I had waited too long, and that he would make his spring before I could fire. The other lion a few steps further on, placed himself abreast of his comrade, and it was not until then that I saw that both of the animals were females, but of so large a size that their sex was scarcely recognizable. Their stealthy motions were feminine, though the texture of their skin, their form, and their royal proportions had completely deceived me as to their sex. How beautiful they were as they drew down like pointer dogs on their prey, with every passion of their souls delineated on their faces!

I took aim at the shoulder of the first and fired. The report of the gun and the loud roar of the wounded lioness brought the dreaming Arab with a bound to his feet. A second ball pierced her heart and she fell dead at the very feet of the frightened man, who stood rooted to the spot by his terrible nightmare.

Without losing any time, I changed guns with my spahi, and looked around for the other lioness. She was on her feet at a little distance off, watching with amazement the scene before her. As I took aim at her shoulder, she crouched down to the ground. I fired, and she rolled over, badly wounded as it appeared, and sought safety in a corn-

field that bordered the road. On coming to the place where she had been standing, I could hear her mutterings in the plantation, but did not think it was best to follow her into the land of shadows at such an hour. So we waited for daylight, and then followed the trail until it left the field, and entered the woods where it was soon lost to sight.

After having sent the body of the lioness I had shot to the camp, where the soldiers tendered it the funeral honors due to a hero, I resumed my post of the previous evening. A little while after sunset, I heard the lion roar for the first time, and then instead of leaving his lair, he remained there crying like one possessed, all night. Convinced that the wounded lioness was there, and that it was the sympathy of her husband that shook the hills with its complainings, I sent a couple of Arabs the next morning to find the spot, but they returned in a little while afraid to venture.

The following two nights were passed like the first, and from evening until morning, the forest was full of the roarings and murmurings of the distressed lion.

The next afternoon I took a young kid, and having muzzled it, we turned our steps up the mountain to the lion's den. It was situated in the wildest and most inaccessible part of the mountains, and so difficult of approach that we had to crawl on hands and knees, one after the other, to get there.

Presidently I judged that we had reached the neighborhood of the proprietors of the domain, and I had the kid tied to a tree, and his muzzle removed.

Then there ensued a most amusing panic among the Arabs that had accompanied me, and almost a stampede. To find themselves in the den of lions, scenting their breath, and then to hear that cursed kid calling them to come with all his might, was a position of terror not to be endured. After having consulted hastily among themselves, whether it would

be safest to take to their heels, to mount a rock, or climb one of the stunted trees that grew on the declivity, they concluded that the best place for them would be nearest to me, and asked permission to remain.

This confidence in my success was a compliment too great to be resisted, and I granted the request; they squatted in the moss, and we waited the action of the powers that be.

In about a quarter of an hour the lioness appeared, and before she saw us, she was by the side of the kid. At sight of the strangers she halted, looking around her with astonishment, and before she could recover from her surprise, I fired at her head, and she fell motionless. The Arabs sprang to their feet in joy, one came to kiss my hand, another ran to examine the prize, when suddenly the lioness, that whilom lay so stark, sprang to her feet with a hasping growl like a panther, displaying a row of teeth like bayonets.

One poor devil almost had his hand on her as she arose. He gave a leap and a scream together, seized a branch of the tree over his head, and disappeared in the foliage like a squirrel. The rest fled in dismay, and the lioness fell dead under a second ball that passed through her heart.

Her body went to supply the rations of our soldiers, and I continued in the mountain to listen to the roarings of the lion, who all the while went about seeking his mates, muttering loud displeasure at their absence. For some time longer I waited on the hills, until I judged from the silence about me, and the confidence of the wild game roaming about, that the lion had left. His solitary life was unpleasant to him, filled as it must have been with the memories of his past conjugal happiness, and perchance, troubled with some premonitions of a similar fate impending over his own head; at all events he packed up his worldly goods, and departed to seek another home.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## MY OLD FRIEND THE LION OF KRENCHELA.

AFTER the return of the expedition to Kabylie in 1851, I asked General St. Arnaud, the commander of the province, for a leave of absence to go back to Krenchela, in pursuit of the lion I had left behind me, the death of whose wives has just been described.

Instead of a leave of absence I was ordered to go there on duty, and was consequently obliged to stay in the neighborhood of the widowed animal, and yet close my ear to the appeals of the natives against his daily transgressions. But, finally, my duties were finished. I hurried off my report in high glee, pitched my tent in the neighborhood of the douars that had most suffered from his depredations, and opened the campaign.

For a number of days and nights my searches were fruitless, when one morning after a heavy rain, a native came to my tent to tell me that the trackers had turned the lion, and had marked him down at a half a league from my tent. I immediately started, taking with me three men, the one to hold my horse, one to take care of my arms, and the other to carry a kid that nibbled the hand that held it, all unconscious of the important role it was destined to play in the coming scene.

Having dismounted on the edge of the woods, I followed

up the lion's tracks until I reached a little glade, about in the centre of the woods, as near as I could judge, and having fastened the kid to a sapling, took my seat on a tuft of herbs a few yards off. With the first bleat of the kid the Arabs scampered, and disappeared in the high grass like quails.

I had been at my post about a quarter of an hour, the kid crying all the while, when a covey of red partridges took wing directly behind me, uttering their customary cry when surprised. I looked around me on every side, but could see nothing to excite their alarm, nevertheless there was something present not revealable to sense, for the kid suddenly had ceased its cries, and its eyes were fixed in terror on mine, and now and then it struggled violently to break its tether.

I turned again to look if there was any thing in sight, when my eyes caught the eyes of the lion himself, lying at the foot of a juniper tree, about fifteen paces off, examining us through the branches, and making wry faces all the while at the spectacle.

In the position I sat it was impossible to take aim without turning. I tried to fire from my left shoulder, but finding it too awkward I slowly turned around without rising, and took aim again.

At the motion the lion raised on his feet and shaking himself, opened his yawning mouth at me, with the air of asking the question, "What the devil are you doing there?"

I immediately fired down his throat, and he fell motionless to the earth.

At the report of my gun the Arabs came running up, and fearing lest there might occur some accident if the animal was not entirely dead, I sent another ball through his brain. On examining the prize, we found it was a beautiful beast, black as a bull, and robed in a mane that fell in wavy folds to his feet. I sent him to the camp at Krenchela, and he

made the pot boil that night for four companies of infantry and two squadrons of cavalry. Upon dissecting him, I found that my first ball, fired into his throat, had entered the vertebræ, and followed the marrow in the spinal column, until it had passed out near the tail.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

A LION HUNT IN THE VALLEY OF OURTEN, AND THE TRAGICAL  
FATE OF AMAR-BEN-SIGHA.

ON the 17th day of July, 1853, I entered the beautiful valley of Ourten.

The pole of my tent had scarcely been set, before the people of the country crowded around to welcome me, and tell sad tales of the old lion that ruled over all that district. I learned that since my last visit to this country, the mountaineers having lost all loyalty under the load of his oppressions, had assembled to the number of three hundred to bring him to reason, and either to force him to abdicate, or to inflict upon him the extreme penalty of the law. The parliament opened at sunrise, at noon five hundred cartridges had been burned, at sunset the meeting was prorogued, the rebels carrying with them from the field, six wounded men and one dead body, and his majesty continued to reign as before.

Among my visitors was one Sidi-Amar, a Saga of great repute in the Ourten country, and he favored me with his blessing and prophecy in these terms.

"The Great God will smile on thy arms. Within three suns our wives and our children shall assemble under this tree to count the teeth of the lion—the curse of the prophet be with him—and to kiss the hand of our benefactor."

If I had fully confided in the predictions of this holy

marabout, I need not have left the place where I was standing, but the lion would have come and allowed himself to be shot with perfect complacency. But with whatever confidence this blessed saint inspired me, a confidence which was shared by every Arab in the district, I had still greater faith in the proverb, "Help yourself and heaven will help you," and so I spent the day in gaining all the information I could about the habits of the animal, and in giving instructions to the huntsmen and trackers for the labors of the morrow.

The duty of these men was to take each some particular section of the woods, and search for the track of the game, having found it to follow it to where it entered the forest and then search to see if another trail showed that it had again broken cover. In a word, to follow it like huntsmen when tracking a stag or a wild boar, and having once marked down the game, to bring me word at a given rendezvous on the edge of the forest.

The second day after my arrival, the meet came together at the designated place, when the trackers made the following report :

"The lion and his wife have been out all night. The lion took a long walk all round the plain, and there are no signs of his coming in again before the herds trod down the paths in the morning. The lioness came in about nine in the morning, and all the trackers united on her trail, and have followed it up to a wood of about fifteen acres in extent, where she still lies hid."

I came to the wood and watched the track where it entered the thicket, and when the lioness came out at night, she fell at the third shot.

The next day we followed the same plan, only knowing that the lion; seeking his mate, would give a long run to his pursuers, I appointed the hour of rendezvous at two o'clock instead of daybreak.

On the return of the hunters, I learned that the lion had made a long course, following nearly all the mountain paths, and visiting nearly all his customary lairs, that he had killed a mule and two beeves on his route as a sort of pastime, and then had taken to the ridge of the hills, going towards the south. His last resting-place was at three leagues from the rendezvous.

I took my horse and rode to the place where the Arabs had abandoned the trail, and dismounting, I waited for night to follow up the path he had taken, hoping that he might return by the same road. At about eleven o'clock in the evening, not having met my game, and hearing a great uproar among the douars on the plain, I supposed the lion had entered the wood by some other path, and I therefore returned to my tent.

Four more days were occupied with the same searches, the same long walks, and were rewarded with the same want of success; the lion seemed to amuse himself by leading us a merry chase over the greatest extent of country through which ever hunter stumbled.

While I was occupied in this manner, I was joined by Mr. Rodenburgh, an officer in the army of Holland, who had accompanied the expedition to Kabylie, and now sought the wild life of a hunter under the Arab's tent, enjoying with the zest of a true sportsman, the beautiful scenes and thrilling excitement of the chase.

I was engaged in conversation with him, when a native came riding up from the south to tell me that the lion had fixed himself in the woods of Tafrent, and had killed eight horned cattle in his short sojourn in the neighborhood. We immediately returned with the Arab, not taking the time to strike our tents, and carrying with us only my arms, my spahi, and some of the best of the native hunters.

The next day my men found the lion's trail coming out of

the woods, but could not tell where he had entered it again. In order to relieve, in some degree, the labor of the trackers, I took my position on the edge of the forest for the remainder of the hunt, and at night we heard the lion roaring at half a league distant, and before morning he had taken off a sheep a short distance from our station. On the next morning, the order was given at daybreak, forbidding any men or herds to leave the douars until the return of my trackers, so that the trail of the lion might not be effaced by the tracks of the cattle coming after him. We then quietly waited at our bivouac, the coming in of the huntsmen.

Presently they appeared one after the other, covered with the marks of their hard walk in the mud and among the thorny bushes, and took their seats among the crowd of Arabs that were squatted around my mat, and gave their stories as follows :

Report of Bilkassem Bil-Eouchetz :

"I took the track at the douar hedge, and followed it to the skin of a recently killed sheep, thence to the brook where the lion stopped to drink, and there I left it on finding the sign of Amar-ben-Sigha, who had taken up the trail at this place."

Amar came up at the moment that his brother tracker had taken his seat. His face was beaming with pleasure; he had no need to speak, every one read in the gleaming of his eye, that he had turned the lion, and was sure of what he was about to say. As he passed through the circles of Arabs, one would pull him by the burnous, and another would interrogate him by word or gesture, but Amar held on his way, zealous to confide to me alone the secret his telling features could not retain.

Poor fellow, how little he thought that the battle he snuffed so eagerly would leave him torn and motionless on the field!

The following is the report of Amar-ben-Sigha.

"I found the lion drinking at the brook of Tafrent, where he halted for a moment. I followed him through the burnt woods, that you may see from here, and he laid down on the edge of it to sleep till daybreak, judging from his couch, and the signs he left on the ground.

"After leaving the burnt woods, he swam the brook that bounds the woods of Tafrent on the east, and entered their cover. I rounded the woods, following the brook on the westerly side, and the road that bounds it on the easterly side.

"Finding that he had not quitted the woods, I returned to his trail where I had left it, and followed it to within a gunshot of the lair. Here the men who were with me refusing to go any further, I returned to give my report. I judge that the animal is now lying at the foot of the white rock known as the Lion's Rock."

Now that we were certain of the lion's locality, it only remained to choose a mode of attack, and on this the opinion of the council was taken.

There are three ways of attacking a lion where he is known to be in his lair. The one by surrounding the place, and making a great hurrah, until he indignantly charges the disturbers of his peace, the other by stealthily approaching him as he lies asleep. To make this plan successful, you must know that he has had a good dinner so recently that he could not have digested it, otherwise the hunter may, perchance, be caught napping himself. The third manner of attack is by means of a live bait.

Amar-ben-Sigha having given his opinion that it would be impossible to attack the animal we were after in his lair, by reason of the closeness of the woods, we decided upon baiting him.

That afternoon, as the sun was setting, a wild-looking

party might have been seen winding its way among the copse of cork, olives and jujube trees, that were scattered along the slopes of the hill.

Mr. Rodenburgh and myself were on horseback, following at a half trot the long strides of Amar-ben-Sigha. Behind us came an Arab carrying in his arms a kid, that from time bleated for the mother it had left, and finally a half-dozen Arabs, each with his long gun and yataghan, ran behind as a sort of rear guard, scampering off here and there on the rocks with the agility of cats, to look down on the fields, or pointing out passing trails with a quick motion of finger or eye. At half past seven, we reached the brook where Amar had taken the trail, and a moment's halt permitted us to see the huge foot-prints that were stamped in the mud on either side of the ford, and showed the animal to be a large old lion, and the natives at once pronounced it *my friend of Kren-chela*.

The lion, as near as we could judge, was sleeping on the southern slope of the mountain, and about a hundred paces from a deep ravine. On the other slope of the hill, and on the border of the same ravine, I found a little clearing or glade of about ten square yards, completely surrounded by high trees, and not more than a hundred and fifty yards from the very bushes where the lion lay concealed. We immediately took possession of the spot, and while one of the men was busy tying the kid to a tree, and the others were handling me my guns, the lion quietly stepped out of the woods on the other side of the ravine, and looked at what we were doing with evident marks of curiosity and interest.

At the sight of this apparition there was a general rush among my men, so immediate and so universal, that in a second I was alone facing the lion, with only the kid in sight, who screamed with fear and tried hard to break the cord and come to me. In another instant the lion had disappeared

again ; without doubt, he was coming up to closer quarters under the dense vault of foliage that darkened the woods. I took my seat where I could best see all around me, and with my knife cut away the branches that might impede my aim, and all the while the kid continued to cry most piteously.

Presently it suddenly hushed and commenced trembling violently, looking first at me, and then towards the ravine, and seemed to say, "*The lion is there, I smell him ; he is coming, I hear him ; he comes, I see him.*"

It had at first only caught his wind when it so suddenly hushed ; its ears showed when it heard his steps by their quick nervous motions ; and finally when it trembled so violently, I saw the lion at the same moment as the sensitive animal.

The monstrous beast leisurely mounted the side of the gulch, and halted at the edge of the clearing at about ten steps from me. He stood directly facing me, and his broad forehead presented a beautiful target.

Twice my rifle was raised to the level of his eyes, twice I drew a bead on the heavy wrinkle that divided his forehead and my finger gently pressed the trigger, and yet the hammer did not fall and I felt a secret pleasure at the delay. Two years or more had passed since I had seen so large a lion, so beautifully majestic in the calmness of his might ; he was where I could see every expression of his countenance, how could I destroy him without looking at him ?

What is a dead lion ? What is a beautiful woman when in her shroud ?

Beauty without life is unchanging ugliness.

If it is true that living is to feel the emotions of the soul, where and how could I live so long or find emotions equal to those that were throbbing in my soul in such an interview ?

The noble animal, as if he understood my thoughts, stretched himself out on the grass, and having crossed his enormous

paws laid his head down on them like on a pillow. Without paying any attention to the kid, paralyzed by fear, he examined me from head to foot with the greatest interest, at times winking his eyes with a benignant expression, and then suddenly opening them to their fullest extent, giving his physiognomy an air of sternness that made me involuntarily raise my rifle.

He looked as if he was talking to himself, and this is what he seemed to say :

"I saw a group of men in this place a few moments ago leading a kid by a string, and I came over the gully to see what they were at. Now I find they have all gone except one droll fellow all red and blue, the like of which I never saw before, and instead of running away like the men dc generally, he sits still as if he wanted to say something."

Then at intervals, as the twilight descended more and more in the woods, he seemed to add, still speaking to himself :

"It is about my dinner time ; which shall I take, this red man or the kid ? The sheep I had yesterday was much better than any kid can be, but then it's so far to go to get any mutton. Men are good in general when they are fat, but this red one is rather lean."

This last reflection seemed to decide the question ; for he immediately arose to his feet, and fixing his eyes on the kid, took two or three steps in advance.

With my rifle barrel following all his movements, I watched the turning of events, ready to fire at the best moment.

Twice he prepared to bound on the kid crouching down like a cat, and yet he restlessly raised himself and gazed again in a thoughtful manner.

I saw that the cord that confined the goat troubled him, and that he suspected a trap. He then walked back and forward on the edge of the ravine, showing signs of annoyance, and when he came opposite to me, he bared his teeth ir.

a menacing manner. I saw the game was becoming serious, and made ready to fire.

Taking advantage of an instant when he turned his side to me as he was promenading to and fro, I drove a ball through his shoulder, and while he was writhing under the sudden shock, I sent another through his side directly behind his shoulder, and with a roar and a crash, the lion pierced through and through by the two balls, rolled like an avalanche down into the ravine.

As I was reloading my rifle, the Arabs rushed up, and I pointed out to them the place where the animal had stood when I fired. On looking down the declivity, we saw where the bank was stained by blood, and furrowed by the claws of the beast, as he had attempted to regain the plateau. Convinced that he was dead, the Arabs started off for the neighboring heights, to call their friends to carry off the body, while I descended to the dry bed of the torrent below, and followed the bloody marks along the bottom, until they disappeared in a thicket, so close that I could not see under it. In order to know if the animal was there, I threw a stone in the bushes, and was answered by a hollow growl, half plaintive, half menacing, that came from a spot twenty paces in advance, and gave a stern warning of murder in its tones.

This sound chilled my heart, and recalled to me the voice of the lion of Mejez-Amar, that six years before had mangled Rostain and two Arabs under my very eyes.

I bent down on my knees and tried to peer under the bushes, but could see no further than the first branches, still dripping with the blood of the lion as he passed. After having broken a twig to mark the place where the trail had entered, I was going to leave, when my spahi came up with two of my huntsmen and four armed Arabs, all of them eager for a pursuit. I tried every inducement to prevent them from entering into the jungle, where they wanted to hunt for the body of the

lion. I assured them that I was certain that he was still living, that it would be impossible for us to see him until he bounded on one of us, and that as surely as we entered, there would be one man the less to come out.

The only answer the daring fellows gave, was the casting aside their burnous, and asking me to sit on them until they came back.

In two minutes I had thrown off every article of clothing that could embarrass me in the bushes. I gave Amar-ben-Sigha my carbine, Bilkassem I armed with the two pistols given to me by the Count de Paris, and my spahi with my gun, with directions to keep it loaded, and follow me step by step.

After having directed the men to keep in as close a body as the nature of the woods would permit, and having urged Mr. Rodenburgh to retire from a danger, the extent of which he could not estimate, which advice he deigned totally to disregard, we carefully entered the thicket.

Crouching down like so many blood-hounds, we followed step by step, the red stains, until we reached a little clearing, where all signs of the trail totally disappeared. Each one turned about, searching for some mark to guide us. The night was coming on apace. Minute by minute the task was increasing in danger, and the grim thoughts in our breasts made us work about in the close cover with a breathless care and speed.

Presently, by the intenseness of his excited grasp, an Arab discharged his musket. The ball sped away without doing any harm, but the sound roused the lion, who roared fiercely in the bushes.

With the first sound of his voice, the men ran to group themselves around me, all but Amar-ben-Sigha, who either from inexperience or over-confidence in himself, placed his back against a tree six paces distant on our left.

The same second, the lion bounded into the opening, with open mouth and raised mane. Hardly had he appeared before eight shots were fired at him without one ball touching him.

Before the smoke of the useless powder had lifted, and before a word could be spoken, Amar-ben-Sigha, who had also fired his piece with the rest, was crushed to the earth, his gun was broken, his right thigh stripped of its flesh, and at the moment I came to his succor, his head had disappeared in the jaws of the lion, that had laid down on his body watching my gun taking aim upon him without ever loosing his victim.

Fearing for the head of the man in aiming at that of the lion, I fired for the heart. As I fired, Amar-ben-Sigha fell from the lion's mouth, and rolling to my feet, grasped me so convulsively that he nearly threw me down, groaning fearfully all the time, and yet the lion, with his side leaning against the branches that cracked with his weight, still kept his feet.

I aimed again; this time for the temple, and pulled the trigger. Only the cap snapped. For the first time in ten years my gun had missed fire, and yet the lion was still there, tearing with his teeth the clump of bushes he was leaning against, and writhing in convulsions, only a step from me, and almost over the body of the fallen man.

All the hunters rushed to the rescue, some with their yataghans and some with clubbed muskets, paltry weapons against a foe insensible to balls.

My first motion was towards my spahi Hamida for my gun that I had left in his hands. Trembling, with haggard eye and palsied lips, he could only articulate one word, "Empty!"

The fool had fired with the others, and we were at the mercy of the lion.

But Providence was with us, and the beast fell dead on the body of Amar, and between Mr. Rodenburgh and myself.



"Before the smoke of the useless powder had lifted, and before a word could be spoken, Amar-ben-Sighe, who had also fired his piece with the rest, was crushed to the earth, his gun was broken, his right thigh stripped of its flesh, and at the moment I came to his succor, his head had disappeared in the jaws of the lion, that had laid down on his body watching my gun taking aim upon him without ever losing his victim."—PAGES 892.



The animal once beyond mischief, I turned to the wounded man, who was now lying senseless, and found the marks of the lion's teeth on his head, his back furrowed by claws, and his right thigh and leg all peeled of flesh. The blood was flowing in streams, and we were deep in the forest with darkness all around us.

While the Arabs were preparing a litter of branches and burnous, I endeavored to find and stop the hæmorrhage, but the dying man recovering his senses and uttering fearful cries, obliged me to desist. I cannot describe our many difficulties in getting out of the jungle, but the sight of that cortege as it wound up the deep ravine, bearing aloft the litter trickling with blood, and preceded by torches, was an imposing spectacle. Had any one seen the column from a distance, he would have said, that it was the body of the lion we were carrying in triumph home. Though from time to time a shriek from the litter, as the bearers jostled over the rough ground, rose above the clamor and mingled with the hooting of the owls above us, or the whining of the jackals that lapped up the blood in our trail. Our progress was so slow that it was not until midnight that we reached the tent prepared for the wounded man, and set down our ghastly burden.

I had always seen the Arabs deeply affected when one of their people fell under a ball, and I could not reconcile their feelings then, with their indifference now. They only spoke to their comrade to say, "*Such things only happen to men*;" then they would turn aside to talk among themselves about the different scenes of the drama, gesticulating like madmen, and commencing over again their history whenever they found a new auditor. As for me, I was sick with their heartlessness, and sad at the victory that had cost us so dear.

Early the next morning I called to see Amar, and found his old mother, and a crowd of relatives at his bedside, who

all thanked me with great feeling for having as they said saved him from the claws of the lion, and asked me to prescribe something for his relief.

Poor souls! they thought that all Frenchmen were surgeons, because there are some good physicians among them; and that any one that can kill a lion, can cure the wounds he makes. I never had the least notion of surgery, and as to the wounds made by the lion, experience has told me that recovery is doubtful, and that one almost always leaves behind him an arm or a leg before he recovers, if indeed, he recovers at all. This knowledge is just enough for me to know on what to rely in case I ever get caught, but still is very poor consolation to administer to a wounded man.

I had often seen men injured much less than Amar, sink under their wounds, and I therefore advised his parents to send him to Batna, where he would find a good physician and all attention. But the poor man would not consent to be moved on account of the sufferings he endured at the least motion, and I was constrained to try my hand with Mr. Rodenburgh, in administering a poultice and binding up the wounds. We then sent for an Arab doctor that enjoyed a great reputation in the country, and went to visit the dead game we had left in the woods.

There was a great crowd of people swarming like bees up and down the plateau where the lion had been first shot, and into the ravine. By their assistance in a little while a road was cut from the thicket, and by means of a litter composed of the trunks of small trees the body was transported to the place where the evening before his majesty had honored me with so long an interview.

After having taken off the skin and observed with attention the course and effect of my balls, I abandoned the body to the natives, who, with knife in hand, fell upon it with the fury of hounds on a quarry.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## A HUNT WITH THE ARAB LADIES.

Two days after, while smoking my pipe in my tent, and dreaming of a land where lions roamed in herds like gazels, my fancies were put to flight by the sudden irruption of a half-dozen Arab women, tearing their hair and weeping small rivulets of tears.

My first thought was that Amar-ben-Sigha was dead, and the women were deploring his loss. I felt my heart melting under the softening influences of their grief, and a sympathetic sorrow arose in my throat; but when they told me the reason of their coming, I had to roar out with laughter to learn that it was simply on account of another lion that had just arrived in the country, and killed three of their cattle. As their tears and sobs were all the while increasing, I hastened to rid myself of such lugubrious company, by assuring them that I would do my best to relieve them from their guest; when their tears ceased as if by magic, and they departed, fully satisfied that their enemy was already numbered with the dead.

The douar to which the cattle that had been killed belonged, was situated at a short distance from my tent, and I sent for the guards in order to get from them any information they could give concerning the new comer. They told me that at about six o'clock in the evening while driving the herds down the mountain road, the animals scampered off on

every side in the greatest fright, and that when they collected them together again, three of them were missing. They had not seen the cause of the disturbance, or even any strange tracks, but that there was no mistake with the herd, nothing ever excited such terror but the lion. I directed them to seek the bodies of the beeves early the next morning, and after having found them to drag the two that were most exposed to where the vultures would spy them, and carefully cover the other with branches without moving it from where the lion had left it.

The next afternoon at sunset, I took my way to the mountain under the guidance of one of the Arabs who had found the bodies, and accompanied by two men to carry my guns. In about an hour we arrived at the broken ground that bordered the wood, and passing by two skeletons that the birds had carefully picked since daybreak, we presently found the one that had been protected, lying in a thicket. After uncovering the dead ox, I found only one mark of teeth at his throat, and one stroke of claws on his shoulder, which proved that the act had been done by either a lion or a full-grown lioness.

The ordinary den of the lions, when they came into this country, was about five hundred yards beyond the place where the ox was lying, and being assured that the animal would come from that direction, I placed myself accordingly, and sent off my men. I was about taking my seat, when casting a last look over the plain, I caught sight of a lioness walking on the road to Krenchela. After she had followed some time this road, she turned aside on a path I well knew, that led to a spring, and in about a quarter of an hour more I saw her coming back by the same road and enter the wood. As soon as she disappeared in the margin of the forest, I took my position by the body to be ready for her coming.

I was unfortunately placed in the midst of a thicket so dark that I could see but a portion of the dead body that lay within ten feet of me, and felt that I would not be able to have two shots, but must either kill or cripple my animal with one ball, or be in turn killed by her.

A moment's waiting, with nerves on the stretch, but no sound or sign. Another moment's perfect stillness, and then the heavy belching roar of a hungry lioness sounded a few yards below me on the path, where were lying the two carcasses so closely picked by the vultures.

Another pause, and then my strained ear gave me the sound of heavy steps along the gravelly path, and I could hear the regular guttural respiration that the animal makes when walking. Then another pause, and the sound both of her steps and her breathing ceased, and that, too, at the moment I knew she was within twenty paces of me.

Did she scent the danger? Could she see me? These questions flashed through my mind like a thought. I could scarcely see the barrel of my gun, much less an animal of the dun color of the lioness, under the deep shadows of the thicket. Delay was dangerous, and the darkness increased visibly.

I hesitated no longer, but with my gun to my shoulder, and stepping lightly and quickly, I walked forward, peering into the woods ahead of me to try and spy my foe. My heart ceased to beat. The tame sluggish feelings of years were evolved in those few seconds of life. The blood shot through my veins, and sensations through my mind with an immortal speed that words cannot tell, and when I presently caught sight of the outline of the lioness standing between two trees, listening to the almost inaudible noise of my coming, I aimed for her side, fired, and then kneeled to see under the smoke. All this was done with the instinct of the hunter, but without any reasoning of the mind, so quickly did each event crowd

the other, while countless thoughts all the while winged through my brain.

As soon as I could see anything under the cloud of smoke that hung in the still air, I knew that the lioness was no longer in sight, and I heard her growling and thrashing the branches in the same place where she stood, and was satisfied that she was badly hurt.

Not fancying, to make a nearer investigation at such an hour, I called to my men, and we returned to the douar, to renew the search when the light of day should put us on a more even footing.

Great was the joy of the inhabitants of the douar when they heard of our success. The same lugubrious party that had serenaded me on the yester-eve, now surrounded me with dances and homages, calling upon the moon and the fair stars of Heaven to shine upon me, springs to burst forth on my path, and shady trees to grow over me when I laid down to sleep. They all prayed permission to go up to the mountain with us the next day, to see the lioness before being skinned, and to choose the best pieces of flesh.

The next morning, before sunrise, I started for the scene of the evening's adventures, followed by every soul in the douar. After reaching the place where the lioness had fallen, I ordered the rest of the party to wait, and I followed the trail, attended by my spahi.

At the place where I had taken my shot on the previous evening, I found a pool of gore, and the regular line of blood then turned down the hill, spotting the grass in clots and marking the bushes on either side where the animal had pushed through. It was soon apparent that the lioness had frequently fallen in her flight, and every time she had struck the ground, a deep furrow showed that her shoulder was broken, and a portion of the bone protruding. From this, I saw that she must have been standing obliquely to me, and

the ball that had entered on one side, had passed through and broken the other shoulder, which accounted for her declining any further combat after my first shot.

The lioness, dead or alive, could not be a great way off, and it was time to be wary, and not to track her in such a manner as to get below her on the declivity of the hill, or to come upon her too suddenly. For this reason, whenever we came to a bush large enough to conceal the body of the animal, I made my spahi throw stones into it, to excite her to come out, or cause her to make some noise, by which we could judge of her locality.

This plan succeeded perfectly. We had just crossed a little glade where the lioness had lain for a long time, to judge by the quantity of blood she had left, and from whence the trail entered a very close thicket. My man threw a stone into the bushes, and I heard that same fierce roar, half of pain, half of menace, that I had heard twice before in my life. Only in this instance, I knew that I was safe, for I had the advantage of the position, and broad daylight.

Nevertheless, as the animal was still a lioness, and her three paws were armed with immense claws, and as the teeth that had so effectually strangled the cattle on the previous day, were, doubtless, of respectable size, I took such measures as I thought would insure myself from being treated like the oxen.

The jungle where she had taken refuge was so close, that it would have been impossible for the hunter to have penetrated it, without coming directly upon the animal before seeing her, in which case she would certainly have seized the intruder and torn him to pieces.

But, fortunately, there was a clear open piece of ground bordering the woods, and I resolved to draw her out from her retreat, and meet her on even terms on the sylvan arena. Accordingly, I sent one of the Arabs to the tents for some

more guns that I needed, and while the messenger was gone, we made the necessary preparations for the attack.

The great body of the Arabs with their women, were scattered about the clearing, speculating upon the coming scene, or describing with extravagant gestures the events of the previous evening. I directed one of the mounted Arabs to take his position in the midst of the field, where the lioness would see him when first coming out of the jungle; and then, the moment she appeared, to ride directly past me, taking an oblique course, that I might have a fair shot at the animal. When the guns came, I loaded them, and giving them to three Arabs, directed them to climb some tall trees that overlooked the bushes, telling them to fire and hurrah when I gave the word of command. My spahi I kept beside me to hand me my second rifle after I should have discharged my first one. When I had taken my seat on a rock in the middle of the opening, and the people saw that I was expecting the lioness, there was a rush and a scramble for securer places. The women clambered like goats on a high rock that stood near, while the men, with more prudence than gallantry, took refuge in the trees. At the word of command, the armed Arabs fired their guns into the bushes. A fierce roar responded. Then a hurrah from the group of men so safely perched in the trees, and the lioness, with another roar, sprang out of the jungle.

She did not halt for a second, but seeing the cavalier flying from her, charged him without hesitation. As she bounded forward, we noticed she could only use three legs, yet her speed was so great that I had great apprehensions for the Arab she was pursuing, who looked wildly over his shoulder, all the while spurring his horse with might and main.

When the lioness was about forty paces from me I fired a shot at her head that caused her to stumble badly, and then leaving the horseman, she made a straight line for me.

When within twenty paces, I fired both barrels in quick succession, aiming for her breast. She fell like a log. I thought she was dead, and was going up to where she fell, when she once more raised herself on her feet, gave a short roar, fell over on her side and expired.

A great cry went up from all the spectators, and the women rushed down from their stronghold, and as they were the nearest to the scene of action they were first to contemplate the body, and heap reproaches upon the teeth, the eyes and claws of the poor beast, lying so dumbly on the green-sward. As the curiosity of these ladies threatened to keep me on the ground until evening, I promised them if they would go down the mountain I would have the body carried to my tent where they could come at their leisure, and share in the division of flesh. Then we made a sort of triumphal car of boughs of trees and gun barrels, to carry the body of the lioness into Ourten, where I took possession of the skin, dividing the flesh among the Arabs.

The next morning I left this country, bearing with me the trophies of my triple victory, and a sadness that hung over me like a cloud, on account of the state of Amer-ben-Sigha, who had risked his life for his faith in my fortunate star, and would have done so to the end of time without the slightest doubt.

Eight days after, while in the barracks at Constantine, I received a letter from the cādi of Krenchela.

Amar-ben-Sigha was dead.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## ANOTHER PUSH FOR A LION HUNTING BRIGADE.

ONE month after the scene I have described, I was on the road to France on the sick list.

My first thought after reaching Paris was my old plan of organizing a company of hunters under military laws, for the use of Algeria. I addressed myself to Monsieur Count Edgar Ney, the chief huntsman, who received the proposition with favor. A memorial having been requested from me, I had the honor of presenting it myself to the Emperor, but alas, a difficulty arose that I had not foreseen.

In the plan I had proposed for the formation of a company, I had inserted a clause, providing a pension or a place at the *Invalides* for those who had been grievously wounded in the service. This not coming under the laws of the Empire, caused the rejection of my demand, and I had nothing more to employ myself with for the balance of my leave of absence except the writing of this story of my hunts. When that was finished, and I saw that I could obtain no promise from the government in regard to the company of hunters, and no successor came to join me in spite of my reiterated appeals, I looked around for a few days over the idle life of childish struggles, of wearing excitements, and false honors, that wearied the minds and enfeebled the bodies of the effeminate men of Paris, and turned away with joy to the fresh winds of Atlas, and the bold chase of the desert.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## WHEN THE CAT'S AWAY THE MICE WILL PLAY.

ON my arrival at Constantine, I was saluted on every side by complaints concerning the Leonine family, that had most assuredly lost none of its bad reputation during the year that had passed.

The following is a summary of their evil deeds that were narrated to me, as having been done in my absence.

I pass over the pecuniary losses that the tribes of the district had endured, and give only those graver sufferings of the human family, that were well known in the province.\*

In the beginning of the winter, a merchant of Tunis came down to trade with the people of the lower provinces according to his custom, bringing with him his wife to assist him in his negotiations. He had reached a place called Tifech, in the territory of Saderata, and while passing through a defile near the ancient Roman town of Memissa, his wife lingered behind while he drove on his mules laden with goods. On reaching the other end of the pass, he missed his wife, and turned back to search for her, when he suddenly came upon a lion lying by the roadside, quietly making his supper on the body of the poor woman. The animal paid no attention to the man, for he could get men any day he wanted them, and the merchant ran off to relate his horrible story at a neighboring douar.

He tried hard to get the men to come with him to rescue

the remains of his wife, but the evening was coming on, and they would not venture in such a desperate duel. They, however, promised that the next morning they would summon the men from the next douar, and they would go in force to wreak summary vengeance on the murderer.

With the early daybreak the merchant, armed from head to foot, marched towards the place where his wife had fallen, bringing with him the whole force of the Saderatas. They found the spot, but all that remained of the woman was her white robe dabbled red, and her long black hair.

The desolate man prayed the Arabs to lead him to the lion's den, no matter where it might be, and help him take revenge on the ruthless monster. In about an hour the party reached the cover where the lion lay sleeping away the warm hours, and digesting his delicate supper. The Arabs gave a loud hurrah, and he came out of the bushes, and laid himself down in the sun, combing his locks and yawning in the face of all his foes.

"Now, yours shall be the revenge," said the Saderatas to the merchant, "as you have most suffered, go a little nearer, and taking good aim, drive a ball through the head of the infidel; we will stand here to aid you."

The innocent man took a few steps in advance, then slowly levelled his gun and fired.

In the winking of an eye he was dashed to the earth, and torn to pieces in the midst of the jokes of the Saderatas, who then returned to their douars to divide among themselves the goods of the deceased couple.

About a month after this, the Chegatmas were hunting this same lion. One of the hunters perched in a tree near which the lion was passing, sent a ball at him. The animal looked up in the tree, and measuring its height with his eye, gave a bound that carried him so near to the hunter that he dragged him to the earth with his claws, and then made

mince meat of him before he could put in a word of expostulation.

In the evenings of the early spring time, there were three men of the same tribe, who watched for game at a spring called *Ain-Seid*, or the lion's spring. At the dawning of the day, they saw a lion coming down to drink, and he carried in his mouth the body of a beautiful girl. Having reached the water, he deposited his burden on the grass, and commenced licking off the blood that trickled from under her garments down her breast and feet.

Presently he went away again, leaving the body where he had deposited it, and the men mounted a high rock that overlooked the place, and waited to see if he would return.

In a half hour the animal came back with the body of a man, that by its convulsive motions still gave signs of life, and he laid him down by the side of the woman. The hunters then fired all together, and the lion fell dead. In a few moments after, the man breathed his last.

In the month of July, some men of Seguia, of the tribe of Ouled-Mehloul, while on a hunt in the hills, met a lion face to face. They knelt down and waited until the lion charged them, when they all fired at him when he was almost within arm's reach. In spite of six balls the lion sprung on them, wounded two of them severely with his claws, and carried off another in his mouth, shaking him from time to time until he dropped him on the grass dead.

In July, a lion encountered a man and woman that the beauties of the summer night had enticed out to a place called Fournal-Hamia. The kindly emotions of the hour pleaded in vain with the ruthless bandit, and the next morning the tribe found only the garments of the lovers.

During the same month, the hunters of the tribe of Ouled-Mehloul, found a lioness with two cubs in the mountains of the Zerazer. The principal body of the hunters excited the

lioness with cries and missiles, until she charged them, while one or two men in concealment, stole her little ones, and covering them with their burnous, fled away to the plains.

When she discovered her loss, she started in pursuit, with such a fearful intensity of maternal rage, that no barrier could stop her. She descended the mountain, crossed the open plain, and followed the robbers under their very tents. She seized one man and killed him, another got off badly wounded, and every living thing fled from the camp at the terrible invasion, while the lioness made herself quietly at home, and took up her abode in the tent where she had found her cubs.

The dispossessed Arabs fled to the tents of the Ouled-Sassi, and prayed them for help, and the Sheik, Amar-ben Taieb, came to their assistance with fifteen of his best hunters.

After dismounting in front of the douar, they advanced slowly side by side to the gate of the douar, and summoned the lioness to show herself. The queenly mother not only complied with the request, but did so with such alacrity, that she fell like a bomb-shell in the middle of the band, tearing to the right and left, and died on the bodies of three men, that she had grasped in her great arms, with a long and last embrace.

One more story of the misadventures that occurred during my short absence, and I return to the chase.

A few days before the lotus opened its buds to the spring, a lover had wooed and won the heart of a young girl of a neighboring tribe, but as the fates were not propitious, they resolved upon flight and a secret marriage.

Rendezvous was given at the foot of the great rock of Jehel-Hanout, at the hour when the moon should rest her lower rim on the western hills.

The girl arrived as faithful as the moon, and said to her lover, "See what is following me."

The man, or he might better be called the woman, gave one look behind, then fled without saying a word, and abandoned his love to a lioness that had been tracking her all the way from the douar. The morning dawned again, but the girl never came back to her father's tent.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

▲ NIGHT WITH THE ARABS : WITH SEVERAL TRUE AND INSTRUCTIVE LEGENDS, ADAPTED FOR FLIRTING GIRLS AND PRESUMPTUOUS BOYS.

I COMMENCED this, my last campaign, in the latter part of the lusty month of October, and for the first three days of my excursion I hunted the mountains of Ounk-Jemel, and then pitched my camp in the country of the Ouled Sassi, between El-Hanout and the Zerazer.

My tent was the signal of festival among all the tribes, and I was received, as usual, with open arms. From far and near the first men of the tribes, the bravest warriors, and the best hunters, came to salute the new comer, who had so often threaded with them the mountain-paths, and bid him welcome to their tents, and to the half of all they owned.

We passed the first night, Hamida and I, under the tent of the Sheik, lighted by the great fire that burned without and filled with the bronzed figures of the Arabs, and talked of the lion. The men sat in a circle, squatted on the ground ; their pipes sent up their columns of smoke, their black eyes gleamed under the capuchins of their burnous, and one after the other took up the tale, and with brief speech and expressive gesture chased the lion from Dan to Beersheba, or when younger tongues spoke, wove in turn oriental legends of flowers and beasts, and girls with eyes like springs in the desert.

Severed, as I had been, for a year or more from sight of

the limitless plains, or sound of the wild accents of Arab dialect, and climbing for hopes among civilized men, that wooed only to deceive, the tales of that evening fell on my ears like music, and I listened with delight to the varied legends of the mingled cruelty and chivalry, the capricious deeds and the audacity of the seignior of the big head, the lordly sultan of the desert.

Among the different stories that succeeded each other, one after the other, without interruption, I will rehearse one that Alexander Dumas has since written from the dictation of Hamida, my spahi, who enjoys a wondrous memory for such traditionary lore.

It is a sort of philosophical legend, that I recommend to coquettish young ladies. As Alexander Dumas has carried out the tale in his own beautiful style, I will not mar it by change, but give it as he wrote it.

"Once upon a time," began the speaker, smoothing down his black beard, and loosing his girdle, "and a hundred years or more before I saw the light of the sun, there lived a maiden in our tribe, that rendered famous the charming name of Aicha. This maiden was very proud, not that she was richer than the other girls of the tribe, for her father had nothing but his tent, his gun, and his horse, but she was beautiful as a shady tree, and from her beauty was born her pride.

"One day she went out to cut wood in the neighboring forest, and met a lion. Her only weapon was a little hatchet but this was of small moment, for had she been armed like a harnessed knight, she would never have dared to raise a hand before so fierce and majestic an enemy. Her limbs failed her. She tried to call, but her voice sunk to a whisper, and the lion seemed to beckon her to follow him, that he might devour her in some quiet and secret retreat, for the lions are not only gourmands, but great gastronomes. They not only

love to dine largely, but also to have all the appurtenances of luxury that will satisfy their sensual appetites.

"The young girl stood trembling, waiting for the animal to lead her wherever he might list, but what was her astonishment, when she saw him come up to her with the best smile he could bring to his wrinkled face, and make a bow that only lions can make! She crossed her hands on her breast, and said:

"Seignior, what dost thou command thy humble servant to do?"

"When one is as beautiful as you, Aicha, one is no longer a servant, but a queen."

"Aicha was as much astonished at the unaccustomed sweetness of the voice of the speaker, as pleased that so great and beautiful a lion, and one whom she never met before, should be acquainted with her name.

"Who told thee that my name was Aicha?" inquired the young girl.

"The wind that is in love with you, and that is fragrant of roses after it has toyed with your hair, whispers Aicha; the water that bathes your feet, and then runs past my grotto, doth murmur Aicha; the birds that hearing you sing, become jealous, and die of shame, sing all the while, Aicha, Aicha.

"The young girl, blushing with pleasure, made believe to pull down her hawk over her face, but only pushed it further back, that the lion might see the better.

"He had before hesitated to draw any nearer to her, but now taking a few steps in advance, he saw her face growing white with terror at the approach of his huge lips.

"What is the matter, Aicha?" he said, in a voice that was both anxious and fondly caressing in its tone.

"The maiden wanted to say, I am afraid of thee, sir, but she did not dare to do so, and concealed her feelings by saying, 'the Souaregs are near us, and I am afraid of them.'

"The lion's mouth relaxed into a smile, and then he replied with proud earnestness :

" 'I am with you, Aicha, and when I am near, you need fear nothing.'

" 'But I will not always have thee with me,' said Aicha ; 'it is a great way from here to my father's tent, and it is growing late.'

" 'I will see you home,' gallantly replied the lion.

"Taken so by surprise, what could a poor girl do but accept? The lion walked up to her side, and extended to her his mane. She wound her fair hand in his tawny locks, and with her arm resting on his neck as it would have rested on the shoulder of her lover, the twain, each so beautiful, and yet so opposite in their different perfections, walked together towards the douar of the tribe.

"In the road, they met dark eyed-gazels, that fled from them, and hyenas that crouched down to the earth, and men and women that prostrated themselves as to a god. But the lion said to the gazels, do not run away, and to the hyenas, he said, be not afraid, and to the men and women, rise up, for by the grace of this young girl, who is my own true love, I will do you no harm. At the royal word, the gazels wheeled in their swift flight, the hyenas raised their ugly faces, and the men and women rose to their feet, and they all asked : the gazels in the soft language of their race, the hyenas in the grunting tone of their species, and the men and women in the Arab language they spoke : "What is the meaning of this beautiful scene? Do the lion and the girl go together to worship at the tomb of the prophet in Mecca?"

"Thus they walked down through the gum dropping forest, and over the blossom scented field, until they came to the douar, and the white tent of Aicha's father arose in sight. Here the lion paused to say adieu, and with all the grace of the noblest courtier in the land, he asked the young girl's

permission to kiss her. The maiden proffered her warm cheek, and the lion with his great tongue licked the red lips of Aicha. He then bowed to her farewell, and sat himself down as though to watch and make sure that Aicha reached her tent in safety. The girl turned her head three or four times in the short walk before her, to see if the lion was still there, and she saw him always watching her from the same place, until she entered the tent.

“‘Ah! you have come,’ exclaimed the father; ‘I began to be alarmed at your stay.’

“The girl smiled.

“‘I feared that you had had some unpleasant encounter in the woods.’

“The girl smiled again.

“But since you are here, it is a proof that you have not been troubled.’

“‘Indeed, my father, I have had a very pleasant encounter, that is, if you call a lion a pleasant person to meet.’

“In spite of the ordinary impassibility of the Arabs, the old man grew pale.

“‘A lion,’ he cried, ‘and he did not devour you?’

“‘On the contrary, he praised my comely looks, then offered to see me home, and came with me to the village gate.’

“The Arab thought his child was mad.

“‘Impossible!’ he cried.

“‘How impossible?’

“‘How am I to believe that a lion is capable of such a piece of gallantry.

“‘Shall I prove it to you?’

“‘By what means?’

“‘If you go to tent door, you will see him either sitting where I left him, or returning home.’

“‘Wait till I take down my gun.’

“‘Why, am *I* not with you?’ replied the proud and conceited girl, and drawing her father by his burnous, she led him to the door, but the lion was nowhere to be seen.

“‘Very well I see how it is, you have been dreaming,’ said the father.

“‘My father, I swear to you I see him still.’

“‘How did he look?’

“‘He was about four feet high, and seven feet long.’

“‘Well.’

“‘A beautiful mane.’

“‘Well.’

“‘Great eyes, as bright as the topaz.’

“‘Well.’

“‘And teeth like ivory, only’—— the girl hesitated.

“‘Only what?’

Aicha lowered her voice :

“‘Only he had a shocking bad breath.’

She had hardly uttered these words, before a fearful roar thundered from behind the tent, then another sounded about half a mile off, and then another from the neighborhood of the mountains, then they heard nothing more. There had been hardly an instant’s interval between the roars. It was evident that the lion desiring to know what the young girl said of him, had made a circuit and come behind the tent to listen, and had gone off in great mortification, in finding out this imperfection, so much the more dangerous because those who are infected by it, never perceive it themselves.

“A month passed by, and they saw no more of the lion, and the maiden had forgotten him save when she told the story to her comrades to wile away the warm hours of noon. She went again as before, to the woods to cut her fagots, and with hatchet in hand, one day she wandered about until she found herself in the same place where she had met her first adventure. The fagots having been cut and piled

in bundles, she kneeled down to tie them, when she thought she heard a heavy sigh, and on looking around, there was the lion seated a few steps off, watching her movements.

“‘Good morning, Aicha,’ he said, in a dry tone.

“‘Good morning, monseignior,’ returned Aicha, in a trembling voice, for she had not forgotten her remark in regard to his fetid breath, or the triple roar of indignation that followed the impolite disclosure; ‘Good morning; what can I do that will be agreeable?’

“‘You can do me a favor.’

“‘What is it?’

“‘Come close to me.’

“The girl obeyed, inwardly wishing herself home again.

“‘Now I am by you.’

“‘Very well. Now raise your hatchet, and give me a blow on the head.’

“‘But, seignior, thou dost not think’——

“‘On the contrary, I have thought much about it.’

“‘But, seignior’——

“‘Strike.’

“‘But, my dear sir.’

“‘Strike, Aicha, I pray you.’

“‘Hard, or softly?’

“‘As hard as you can.’

“‘But I will hurt you.’

“‘What is that to you?——strike.’

“‘Do you want me to?’

“‘I do.’

“The girl hesitated no longer, but gave a blow with her hatchet between the eyes of the lion, that left a bloody mark where it fell.

“‘Thank you,’ said the lion, and in three bounds he disappeared in the woods. Since that time only have the lions

carried the deep vertical wrinkle between the eyes that appears so remarkable when they raise their eyebrows.

“‘Dear me,’ said Aicha, disappointed in her turn, ‘he is not going to see me home to-day;’ and she turned towards the douar, where she arrived without accident.

“The news of this second encounter soon spread through the village, and the wisest *taleb*s of the tribe laid their heads together to resolve its meaning. After much thought and long reference to the Koran, they discovered the hidden meaning, and translated it as follows: ‘God is great, and the lion doeth what he wills.’

“A month passed by, and Aicha was again in the woods gathering fagots for the evening fire. At the moment she cut the first limb from a cedar tree, its dense branches parted and the lion stepped out with the same melancholy countenance as before, but a gleam burned in his great eyes that seemed to menace what they turned upon.

“The maiden wanted to fly, but those eyes nailed her to the earth, and she could not move. The lion stepped up to her with his royal mien, and her heart ceased to beat for very terror.

“‘Look at my forehead,’ said the terrifier.

“‘But the seignior will recollect that it was he that ordered me to do it, and I only obeyed,’ said the young girl, with a voice whose tones were quivering with heartfelt anxiety.

“‘Yes, and I thank you for it; but it was not that I was going to speak with you about.’

“‘What then is it the seignior desires?’

“‘Look at this wound on my forehead.’

“‘I see it.’

“‘Has it healed?’

“‘Perfectly, it is quite well.’

That proves, Aicha, that the wounds that woman gives

to the body are very different from the ones that she gives to the spirit, the one heals in a month, the other never.'

"This axiom was spoken in a voice that made the tassels on the pine tree quiver in the air. A woman's shriek rang in the forest. The lion's love had gone to sleep for ever, and his sensual appetite had awakened. Tongue may not speak of what followed—prophet of God defend us!

"The next day the father of Aïcha with all the stout men of the douar hunted the woods for the fairest girl of the Zerazer.

"When they reached the place where lay the fagots they found a white haïk, a hatchet, and a scalp of long braided hair, but never has man since that time seen or heard of Aïcha."

After this legend was told, that may seem to ears polite somewhat lugubrious, a moral and amusing fable was recited, entitled, "*The young lion and the wood cutter.*"

The speaker in this instance, was one of the youngest of our hosts, and never did blacker eyes flash from cowed head, or more melodious voice ripple through snowy teeth. He laid aside his long chibouque, and with graceful gesture and bearing commenced the tale that near as may be ran as follows:

"Among the Lords of Mount Aures there once lived and loved a lioness who, though long wedded, and faithful withal, had never yet become a mother. The event so devoutly prayed for as well among lionesses as among wives of more delicate frames, was at length realized, and one morning's sun, as it poured upon the broad roof of the cedar and lotus, and glinted down among grape vines and olives, at last played upon and brightened one tawny cub that nestled in its warm bed of leaves beneath.

"A proud lady was the mother lioness as she purred over

her new born child. A happy cub was that little infant, heir to broader lands than any king, guarded by stronger arms than any prince. The mother bestowed on him a thousand caresses, and watched him grow day by day, bronzed by African suns, and fanned by mountain winds, jealous of every hour that divided him from her side. When he walked out by night she frightened the mountains with her complaining; when he returned the rocks shook at her rejoicings. With long walks and simple diet she strengthened his rugged frame, with good counsel she fortified his understanding, and among her many prudent advices none was given with greater unction than the one, 'My child, beware of the seed of the woman.'

"As the weeks fled by, the strength of the young lion increased. His limbs developed their muscles, his mane came out little by little, and his voice at first so weak and whining like a girl's, became so valorous that the flocks when they heard it, kicked up their heels and scampered to the douars.

"One day he came to his mother, saying, 'Now I am strong and courageous, the seed of the woman I can hold down with one paw, I think I will go out and teach him obedience.'

"The mother, frightened at this foolhardy bravery, endeavored to dissuade him from the attempt, but all her efforts were unheeded or answered only by a pettish growl. Not being able to turn his determination, she renewed her prudent counsels and with a fond lick or two of her caressing tongue gave him to the charge of God and the Prophet.

"The young lion then bounded bravely out of the jungle that had cradled his cubbish hours, and resolutely gained the ridge of the mountains. For a long time he walked boldly on, without seeing anything worthy of his steel. Fox and stag, and light gazel vanished as he came, his very voice

stilled the forest around him, and his young heart swelled high with triumph.

"Presently he saw a bull in one of the plains below him. His horns were like pine trees, his eyes darted red fire, his tail swung backward and forth like a thrasher's flail, and his hoofs tore the sod from the earth and scattered it like hail.

"*'Ha! ha!'* said the young lion, 'there is a warlike creature, that might well be called the seed of the woman that rules the earth. That is my enemy, I will march at him.'

"He walked up with a fierce air to the bull, and in a tone of great emphasis he demanded,

"*'Are you the seed of the woman?'*

"The bull dropped his tail, and replied,

"*'My dear friend, you are foolish. The courage that God has given to the seed of the woman He has granted to no living creature. Do you know how he treats me and my race? He takes us and puts yokes over our necks, and makes us do his work. If we are idle, he beats us with goads, and when too old to act longer as his servants, he slays us and divides our flesh to feed his wives and children.'*

"The lion listened to this story, a sage look of wonder mantled his countenance, and he then continued his course. He could not quite understand what he had heard, but he made up his mind to find his enemy, if he had to turn heaven and earth to do it. After walking a little while, he presently encountered face to face a camel, that was pasturing on a delicate patch of thistles.

"*'This time I have hit it; what fortunate star led me to this mountainous creature?'* said the lion to himself; then to the camel he said:

"*'Sirrah, are you the seed of the woman?'*

"The camel laughed outright, as he tilted up his long neck from the thistle-bed.

“‘You haven’t hit it at all, Master Lion, though you are so wise. What do you want of the seed of the woman? If you will heed the advice of a stranger, who has known him a long while, you will keep the greatest distance from him you can. Look at me—are you able to bend my knees to the earth, to bind pack after pack on my back, and then mounting yourself on the top of all, to guide me and drive me over the desert? That is what the person you seek does to me every day, and if he chooses to cut my stomach open to find water for his children, I cannot resist. Now, then, do you fancy the acquaintance? If so, you have only to go ahead, and you will find him.’

“‘You are a poltroon, you cowardly camel!’ retorted the lion in a disdainful tone. ‘Your old woman’s tales and the stories of the bull on the plain above, only enter one ear to go out of the other. I will continue my road.’

“In a few minutes he saw a horse coursing the fields like the wind; his neigh was music on the air, and his breath was white like smoke.

“‘Holloa!’ called the lion from afar, ‘I am looking for the seed of the woman—are you not he?’

“‘Are you speaking to me?’ said the horse.

“‘Who else is there to speak to?’

“‘Then please to go somewhere else with your jokes, for I have never found any joking in connection with that name. The seed of the woman, prithee! He has saddled and bridled me, though I am swift on the foot, and curbs me to his will.’

“‘Indeed!’ said the lion, as his eyes began to open visibly.

“‘Indeed, it is true; and then he sits on my back, and carry him as fast as I may, he drives his spurs into my side till the sands are dotted with my blood!’

“‘Oh!’ said the lion, in a voice that made the horse take to his heels. The perspiration started under his mane, and he began to think he had not looked before he had leaped. However, it was too late to doubt, and he pushed on.

“The plain was passed, and a forest rose before him on the side of a purling brook, and from time to time, like the call of a bell-bird, he heard the clear sound of a woodman’s axe.

“Entering the woods, guided by the noise, he saw before him the wood-chopper.

“‘This fluttering jay bird may tell me something about what I am seeking,’ muttered the lion, ‘though he is so tattered and poor, he may not even have heard of the great ones of earth.’

“‘God help you, my poor creature. I have been all day hunting after the seed of the woman; can you tell me where I must go to find him?’

“‘Good gracious! most noble sir, he’s not hard gettin’ at; I’ll go and fetch him. But, please sir, while I am gone, this log I am splittin’ won’t stay open unless you will hold it for me. Just put your paws in this crack; I won’t be gone a minit.”

The lion, with a gracious condescension, inserted his paws in the crevice, when the wily woodman knocked away the wedge that held it open, and the log springing together, held the lion’s paws with a gripe like a vice. He struggled and growled in vain.

“The woodman then cut a dozen stout cudgels, and taking the lion by the tail with one hand, administered with the other such an awful bastinado, that the poor creature’s back was beaten softer than his belly. At length, when strength and sticks were all worn out, he released his prisoner by driving in another wedge, telling him to go home and relate to his family that if they would come there, the seed of the woman would give them all the same lesson.

"The poor cub took his way home half dead with shame and pain, and limping like a rabbit. The mother was out watching for the return of her hopeful, and when she saw him coming in this wretched plight, she roared with horror and indignation, and bitterly reproached her child for his folly. She then led him in, and having lain him down, on her best bed, she licked his wounds and administered to him all the care that art and love could suggest.

" 'Ah !' said she, in mournful accents, 'I told you so, you have found the seed of the woman.'

"The young lion then told over all his adventures. The mother said, 'Do you remain here quietly, I will summon all the lions of the mountain, and leading them myself, I will revenge your insults, my poor child.' And great tears of sympathy and anger rolled down her hairy cheeks while speaking. She then went out and roused all the forces of the mountain, and presently with the rising sun, they came trooping past like kings. Pointing out the formidable squadron to her own, she said; 'Do you think they can revenge you ?'

" 'Yes, certainly; but I would rather do it myself'

" 'Rise, and march with us then,' said the proud mother, and the young lion rose and led the van.

"This terrible band then started for the forest by the purling brook. As it came, terrified nature fled away. The wood chopper seeing its approach, cried out :

" 'I am a poor sinner—this day will I see the prophet.' Then recovering himself a little, he hugged a big tree, and scrambled up to the top.

"The leonine army came to the foot of the tree, but, alas ! their enemy was at the top and they at the bottom, and there was no manœuvre in their system of warfare adapted for such a position. They held a council of war. The young lion was among the speakers, and proposed the following plan :

“‘I will stand against the tree, let another of you mount my shoulders, taking the same position, and then another, and another, until we form a ladder that will reach the wretch and drag him down.’

“The counsel was considered good, and forthwith a pyramid of lions might have been seen climbing up the side of the tree, one above another, and gradually approaching the refugee. The topmost round of the ladder was made, and the wood-cutter almost reached, when he called out in a loud voice:

“‘Hold on till I cut a cudgel and give that fellow at the bottom another drubbing.’

“The sound of this voice, so dreadful, but above all the remembrance of the cudgelling he had so recently received, so frightened the young lion that was at the bottom of the pyramid, that he jumped out from under his comrades, and took to his heels with surprising agility. The ladder of lions suddenly deprived of its support, came tumbling to the ground with a great crash. They fell from such a prodigious height, that those that were not killed, were stunned and wounded, and all lay moaning in a heap.

“Then the wood-cutter slid down the tree and seized his axe. He killed those that were wounded, and stripping the skins off of them all, he gaily marched to his douar, the richest man from Cairo to Timbuctoo.”

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE DEATH OF A LIONESS—ILLUSTRATING THE FABLE OF  
THE FLY ON THE COACH WHEEL.

As the young Arab finished his tale, the first dawnings of light appeared through the folds of the tent.

I took my rifle, and giving a warm shake of the hand to the hospitable Sheik under whose tent I had passed the night, rode off with Hamida for the summit of Zerazer, where it had been agreed I should wait for the signal of the chase, which was to be a fire showing the place where the game had been tracked to its lair.

When the sun had reached mid heavens, I saw a white column of smoke stealing up from the distant peak of El-Hanout. A mad gallop of an hour and I dismounted at the foot of the mountain, among the hunters of Ouled-Sassi, who were patiently awaiting my coming. We mounted the hill together, and after climbing the last hundred yards of perpendicular rocks that were piled along the top of the mountain, the tracker who had seen the lioness, and had been keeping watch, pointed me out her den about two hundred yards below me.

A ravine of about five yards in width ran from where I stood, and was lost in the bushes beneath where it was supposed she was still lying hid. Each side of this ravine was bounded by perpendicular rocks, and I knew the animal, in case she was aroused, would either charge the hunters, or else

follow this path, and attempt to escape over the ridge of the mountain.

With any other hunters than the Ouled-Sassi, or even with them in case there had been a lion in question, I would have preferred to have marched right to the lair. But I knew so well the bravery of the one and the habits of the other, that I was sure that in case they walked forward in a solid body without making too much noise, that the lioness would prefer mounting the hill to turning to attack them.

So after giving the necessary orders, and having taken my place with Hamida upon a rock that guarded the passage, I gave the signal to the hunters to advance.

The den which the animal had chosen, was nothing but a jumble of rocks from which grew a number of stunted juniper trees. My thirty hunters divided in two bodies advanced slowly up the mountain, until they came within fifty paces of the bushes, when the lioness came out, and sitting down on her haunches took a quiet survey of the scene. The men knelt down with their guns to their shoulders, and very quietly and politely urged the beast to march off, but she resolutely refused, showing her teeth and snarling with most unfeminine ferocity. One of the party with his flint and steel then set fire to the dry moss that covered the ground, and the wind blowing fresh from up the hills, the lioness was obliged to move off sneezing with the smoke that appeared to her of a very unpleasant perfume.

She slowly ascended the hill following the path I had selected, shaking her head angrily at the disturbance, and from time to time halting to look behind her until she reached the summit of the path, and stood directly before me.

As her eye caught mine, she came to a dead stop, and sat down. Her look wandered from me to my spahi, and then it seemed to be measuring the height of the rocks on which















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